

DIRECTIONS
FOR
Weak distempered
CHRISTIANS,
TO
Grow up to a confirmed State
OF
GRACE.

With **MOTIVES** opening the lamentable
Effects of their Weaknesses and Distempers.

The FIRST PART.

Published also to further that
REPENTANCE, which **WARS**, and
PLAGUES, and **FLAMES**, and **CHVRCH-**
CONVULSIONS, have so long and loudly
Preached to **ENGLAND**.

By Richard Baxter.

LONDON, Printed for *Nevil Simmons*, at the
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To my Dearly Beloved, the Church
of Christ at *Kedermister* in
Worcestershire.

I Suppose you do not only remember, that ten
Years ago I Preached these Sermons to you;
but also what Schisms, what revilings of
the Ministers of Christ, what Heresies of
Ranters, Seekers, and others; what cruelties
against one another, and what remorseless over-
turnings of Government; and worst of all, what
bold appeals to God himself, as if he were the ap-
prover of all this, did give you and me extraor-
dinary occasions of such thoughts and lamenta-
tions as are here expressed! But though the
great mercy of God did preserve your selves
from these transgressions, and made it your lot
to behold them with daily complaints and sor-
rows; yet I must not so flatter you as to say, that
the ordinary weaknesses of Christians are not as
all among you. The things which I specially
loved in you, I will freely praise, which were
[A special measure of humility, a plain simpli-

erty in Religion, a freedom from the common
Errors, a readiness to receive the Truth, a tra-
thelick temper, without addictedness to any
Sect; a freedom from Schisme, and separating
ways; and a unity and unanimity in Religion;
a hatred and disowning of the Usurpations and
perturbations, and Rebellions against the Ci-
vil Government; and an open bearing of your
testimony in all these cases; together with seri-
ousness in Religion, and sober, righteous, chari-
table and godly conversations:] But yet with
all this, which is truly amiable, I know you have
your frailties and imperfections. The weaker
sort of Christians (either in knowledg, or in
holiness) are the greater number in the best
Congregation that I ever yet knew. (To say no-
thing of the unsound). And what may be your
Case these eight years since I have been separa-
ted from your presence, I cannot tell, (though,
through the mercy of God, I hear not of your de-
clining.) It is our sin which hath parted us
asunder, Let us lay the blame upon our selves!
I have now done expecting my ancient comforts
in labouring among you any more: For these
six years time, in which I thought my greater
experience, had made me more capable, of
serving my Master better than before, his Wis-
dom and Justice, have caused me to spend in
grievous silence: And now my decayes and
disability of body are so much increased, that if I
had

The Epistle Dedicatory

Had leave, I have not strength, nor can ever reasonably expect it; Therefore once more I am glad to speak to you as I may, and shall be thankful if Authority will permit these Instructions to come to your view, that the weak may have some more counsel and assistance: And if any shall miscarry, and disgrace Religion, there may remain on Record one more testimony, what Doctrine it was that you were taught. The Lord be your Teacher, and your strength, and save you from your selves, and from this present evil World, and preserve you to his heavenly Kingdom, through Jesus Christ, Amen.

Octob. 31.

1668.

1825

8/3

Your Servant,

R. B.





T H E
P R E F A C E.

Readers,

THat you may neither mis-understand this Book nor me, I owe you this pre-advertisement, That it was Preached in a Lecture at *Kedminster* in *Worcestershire* about seven or eight years ago (1658): That the sad experience of the distempers of weak well-meaning people (though not in that place) yet in those times (especially of those who ran after the most gross deceivers, distracted the Churches, reviled, afflicted, and busily attempted to pull down the Pastors, and actually pulled down the higher Powers, whom God forbad them to resist,) was the chief occasion of the Preaching of these Sermons: And that the special reasons for my publishing them now, are these that follow. 1. Because I perceive not that yet people are sufficiently humbled for those miscarriages, or have yet well found out
A 4 their

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their sins, which by many and sore Judgments have found them out. 2. Because I perceivē that it is too ordinary to speak to *Weak Christians* only by way of comfort, and too rare to shew them the *evil* of their distempers; and that the very terms are used as if they imported nothing, but what is to be loved, or tenderly gainsayed: And most that hear themselves called [*Weak Christians*] do take it for a word of honouring-pity, and feel in it no humbling matter of reproof: As if the comfort of being a *Living man*, did nullity the trouble and pain of Infancy, of a Lethargy, a Leprosie, a Feaver, Gout or Stone. The scandals which have dishonoured Religion in this Age, do tell us that it is not all a Preachers work, to convince and convert the *Infidels* and *Profane* ones, but that much of it lyeth in *detecting Hypocrisies*, and humbling the weak, and healing their distempers, and *saving* and *raising* them from their Falls. The thoughts of the Case of such Christians as these, did tempt *Augustine* once to doubt whether there were not a Purgatory; It seemed so hard to him to believe, either that men who in the rest of their lives were godly and honest, should go to Hell; or that men so guilty of particular crimes and scandals, (of which their ignorance and error kept them from

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from repenting) could go strait to Heaven? And no doubt but it was the heinous sins and great distempers, of men professing Godliness, which caused humane reason to invent and entertain this doctrine of *Purging-pains*: But when God hath cast men into many *Purgatories*, and yet they repent not, I fear it threateneth worse than Purgatory. 3. Moreover I remembered the request of that Learned, Pious, Peaceable, A. B. *Usher*, which I mentioned in the Preface to my *Call to the Unconverted*; According to which I had before Published. 1. That *Call*. 2. Directions against mis-carrying in the work of Conversion. 3. And this I intended for the *Third Part*, when I began it; but was hindered from bringing it to the purposed perfection (The Fourth Part, being Directions for *Peace* of Conscience, being extant long before.) 4. But that which since urged me to this publication was, that the last Sermon which I Preached publickly, was at *Black-Fryars*, on this Text, *Col. 2. 6, 7.* and presently after, there came forth a Book called *Farewell-Sermons*, among which this of mine was one. Who did it, or to what end I know not, nor doth it concern me to enquire. But I took it as an injury, both as it was done without my knowledge and against my will, and to the

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the offence of my Superiors; and because it was taken by the Notary so imperfectly, that much of it was non-sence: Especially when some Forreigners that lived in *Poland*, *Hungary*, and *Helvetia*, were earnest to buy this with the rest of my Writings, I perceived how far the injury was like to go, both against me and many others of my Brethren. Therefore finding since, among the relicts of my scattered Papers, this imperfect piece which I had before written on that Text, I was desirous to publish it, as for the benefit of weak Christians, so to right my self, and to cashier that Farewel Sermon.

If the Reader will but peruse these Directions impartially, and read them as he doth the Prescripts of his Physicians, which are not written meerly to be read, but must be daily practised, whatever it cost him, as he loveth his life, then I make no doubt, notwithstanding the weakness of the composition, but it may further the cure of his spiritual weaknesses and distempers, and of the consequent troubles and losses of others and himself. I hope I shall not meet with many, besides malignant hypocrites, who will be so *impenitent* and peevish, as to fly in the face of the Reprover and Director, and say that I open the nakedness of many servants of Christ, to the reproach and dishonour

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nour of Religion. I have told you from the Word of God, that it is Gods way, and must be ours, to lay the just dishonour upon the sinner, that it may not fall upon Religion and on God : And that the defending or excusing odious sins, in tenderness of the persons who committed them, is the surest and worse way to bring dishonour (first or last) both upon Religion and on them. *A Noah, a Lot, a David, a Solomon, a Peter, &c.* shall be dishonoured by God in holy Record to all ages, that God may not be more dishonoured by them ! And the truly penitent are willing that it should be so ; and account their honour a very cheap Sacrifice, to offer up to the honour of Religion which they have wronged. And till you come to this, you come short of true Repentance. He that *defendeth* his open sin, (unless he could deny the fact) doth as bad as say [God liketh it ; Christ bid me do it ; the Scripture is for it, or not against it : Religion taught it me, or doth not forbid it me ; The godly allow it, and will do the like]. And what can be said more Blasphemously against God, or more injuriously against Religion, the Scriptures, and the Saints ? But he that *confesseth* his sin, doth as good as say [Lay all the blame on me who do deserve it ; and not on God, on Christ, on Scripture, on

on Religion, or on the Servants of God: For I learned it not from any of them; nor was encouraged to it by them; None are greater enemies to it than they; If I had hearkened to them, I had done otherwise.) It is one of the chief reasons why Repentance is so necessary, because it justifieth God and godliness.

And alas, it is too late to talk of concealing those weaknesses and crimes of Christians, which are so visible before all the World! which have had such publick effects upon Churches, Kingdoms, and States: which have kept almost all the Christian Churches, in a torn and bleeding woful state, for so many hundred years, to this present day. Which have separated the Churches of the East and West, and defiled both: And have drawn so much blood in Christian Countreyes: And keep us yet like distracted persons, gazing strangely at our nearest friends, and running away by peevish separation, from our Brethren with whom we must live in Heaven; and mistakingly using those as enemies, with whom (if we are Christians as we profess) we are united in the same Head, and by the same Spirit, which is a Spirit of Love. In a word, when our faults are so conspicuous as to harden the Infidels, Heathens and ungodly, and to hinder the Conversion

DISSENT
version of the World; and when they
sound so loud in the mouths of our com-
mon reproaching enemies; and when they
have contracted so much malignity as to re-
fuse a cure; by such Wars, Divisions,
Church-desolations, Plagues and Flames as
we have seen; It is then too late to say to
the Preachers of Repentance [Be silent, lest
you open the nakedness of Christians, and
disgrace Religion and the Church.] We
must not be silent, lest we disgrace Religion
and the Church, to save the credit of the
sinners.

Whoever readeth the holy Scriptures,
and ever understood the Christian Faith,
must needs know that nothing in all the
World, is so much against every one of our
errors and mis-doings: It is only for want
of *more* Religion, that any Professors of Re-
ligion do miscarry: Nothing but the Do-
ctrine of Christianity and Godliness, did at
first destroy the reign of their sin; and no-
thing else can subdue the rest, and finish the
Cure. It is no disgrace to *Life* that so ma-
ny mens lives are burdensome with sickness,
which the dead are not troubled with. Nor
is it any disgrace to Learning, that Scholars
(for want of *more* Learning) have troubled
the World with their contentious Disputes:
Nor is it any disgrace to *reason*, that mens
disse-

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different Reasons (for want of *more* Reason) doth set the World together by the ears. We can never magnifie you enough as you are Christians and Godly; unless we should ascribe more to you than your bounteous Lord hath given you, who hath made you little lower than Angels, and crowned you with glory and honour, *Psal. 8. 5, 6.* But your sins are so much the *more odious*, as they are brought so near the holy presence; and as they are aggravated by greater *mercies* and professions: And God is so far from being reconciled, or reconcileable to any one of them, that *though he see not such iniquity in Jacob*, as is in Heathens and the ungodly, (because it is not in them to be seen) yet he seeth more *aggravated iniquity* in such sins as you do commit, in many respects, than in the Heathens. And (that which is our common trouble is, that) you hurt not your selves alone by your iniquities; Families are hurt by them; Neighbours are hurt by them; Churches are distracted by them; Kingdoms are afflicted by them; and thousands of blind sinners are hardened and everlastingly undone by them. The ignorant Husband saith, I will never follow Sermons nor Scriptures, nor be so Religious, while I see my Wite that maketh so much ado with Religion, to be as peevish, and dis-

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contented, and foul-tongued, and unkind;
and contemptuous, and disobedient, as those
that have no Religion] The Master that is
prophane faith, I like not your Religion,
when that servant which most Professeth
Religion in my house, is as lazy, and negli-
gent, and as surly and sawcy, and as ready to
dishonour me, and answer again, and as proud
of his little knowledg, as those that have no
Religion at all]. The like I might say of all
other Relations. All the dishonour that
this casteth upon *Grace* is, that you have
too little of it; and it is so weak in you, that
its Victory over your *flesh* and *passions* is la-
mentably imperfect. A servant hearing a
high commendation of a Gentleman, (that
he was of extraordinary wisdom and godli-
ness, and bounty, and patience, and affabili-
ty, and what not) did think with himself,
How happy a man were I, if I could but
dwell in this mans house! which at last he
procured, but ere long went away. His
friend meeting him, asked him how he came
so quickly to forsake his happiness? Did
not his Master prove as was reported? He
answered, Yes, and better than report could
make him, or I could ever have believed!
But though my Master was so good, my
Mistress was so unreasonable, and clamorous,
and cruel, that she would beat us, and pull
us

us by the hair, and throw scalding water upon us ; and there was no living with her]. So *Faith* I hope is the *Master* in your hearts: And that is as good as can be well believed. But the *Flesh* is *Mistress*, which should be but a servant : And that maketh such troublesome work with some of you, that some quiet natured Infidels, are less vexatious companions than you. Nay, and I wonder if you can be very confident of your own sincerity, as long as such fleshly vices, and headstrong passions, do keep up the power of a *Mistress* in you ? I wonder if you do not fear, lest (as a woman said, I will call my Husband Lord with *Sarah*, if I may have my will fulfilled, so) Grace and Faith should have no more than the Regent Titles, while your flesh hath so much of its will fulfilled. I know too many cheat themselves into comfort with the false opinion, that because they have a party in them that *striveth* against their sins, it is a certain sign that they have the Spirit and are sanctified, though the flesh even in the main doth get the Victory : And I know that many have sincerity indeed, who yet have many a foil by boisterous passions, and fleshly inclinations : But I am sure till you know which party is predominant, and truly beareth the governing sway, you can never know whether you are
sin-

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sincere. As once a servant when his Master and Mistris were fighting, answered one at the door, who desired to speak with the Master of the house; [You must stay till I see who gets the better before I can tell you who is Master of the house]. So truly I fear the conflict is so hard with many Christians, between the Spirit and the Flesh, and holdeth so long in a doubtful state, and sense and passion, and unbelief and pride, and worldliness, and selfishness prevail so much, that they may stay themselves a great while before they can be well resolved which is Master. For (to prosecute my similitude) in *Innocent man*, *Spiritual Reason* was absolutely *Master*, and *Fleshly sense* was an obsequious *Servant*, (though yet it had an appetite which needed Government and restraint). In *Wicked men*, the *Fleshly sense* and *appetite* is *Master* (and *Reason* is a *Servant* (Though Reason and the motions of the Spirit may make some resistance). In *Strong Christians*, *Spiritual Reason* is *Master*, and the *Fleshly sense* and *appetite* is a *Servant*; but a *boisterous* and *rebellious* *Servant*, tamed according to the degrees of Grace and spiritual Victory: Like a Horse that is broken and well ridden, but oft needeth the spur, and oft the Reins. So that a *Paul* may cry out, *O wretched man, &c.* In a

weak Christian the *Spirit* is *Master*, but the *Flesh* is *Mistress*, and is not kept in the servitude which it was made for, as it ought: And therefore his life is blemished with scandals, and his Soul with many foul corruptions; He is a trouble to himself and others: The good which he doth, is done with much reluctancy and weakness; and the evil which he forbear-eth, is oftentimes very hardly forborn: His *Flesh* hath so much *power* left, that he is usually uncertain of his own sincerity; and yet too patient both with his sin and his uncertainty: And he is many times a greater troubler of the Church, than many moderate unbelievers. The *Hypocrite*, or *all-most-Christian*, hath the *Flesh* for his *Master* (as other wicked men); but *Reason* and the *commoner Grace* of the *Spirit*, may be as *Mistress* with him: And may have so much *power* and *respect*, above a state of utter servitude, as may delude him into a confident conceit, that *Grace* hath the Victory, and that he is truly spiritual: When yet the Supremacy is exercised by the *Flesh*. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Tree of Life——He shall not be hurt of the second death——He shall eat of the hidden Manna——He shall have
power

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power over the Nations. I will give him the Morning-Star—I will confess him before my Father and the Angels—He shall be a Pillar in the Temple of God, and go out no more. I will grant to him to sit with me in my Throne; ---Rev. 2. 7, 11, 17, 26, 28. and 3. 5, 12, 21.

1665.

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TO THE READER. I will state to the
public, that this is a new
edition of the book, and that it
contains many additions and
improvements, and that it is
now published in a new
and more complete form.

THE CONTENTS.

THe Text opened. *What it is to Receive Christ. The nature of Justifying Faith in its three essential acts. How to know that we have received Christ. What it is to walk in him. What to be Rooted, to be grounded and built up, &c.*

The Doctrine, of the necessity of weak Christians seeking Stability, Confirmation and increase of Grace. What Confirmation is, in the Understanding, Will, Affections, and in the Life.

Twenty Motives to convince weak Christians of the great need of growth and Confirmation.

A Lamentation for the Weaknesses of Christians: in their Knowledge, in their Practice,

The Contents.

in publick Worship, in inward Grace, in
outward obedience, about known Duties,
Confession, Reproof, &c. their uncharita-
bleness, backbiting, pride, &c.

Ten more Considerations to convince them that
it is not trifling, but Great things which God
requireth at their hands.

Twenty Directions for Confirmation and in-
crease of Grace.

DIRECTI.



DIRECTIONS TO THE CONVERTED,

For their establishment, growth, and
perseverance.

Col. 2. 6, 7. *As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the Faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.*

AS Ministers are called in Gods Word the *Fathers* of those that are converted by their Ministry, 1 Cor. 4. 14 15. so are they likened thus far to the *Mothers*, that they travail as in birth of their peoples Souls till Christ be formed in them: Gal. 4. 19. And as Christ saith, John 16. 21. [*A Woman when she is in travail, hath sorrow because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the Child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy*
B 4 *that*

2 *Directions to the Converted, for their*
that a man is born into the World.] So while we are
seeking and hoping for your Conversion, and are as
in travail of you till you are born again; not
only our *labour,* but much more our *fears* of you,
and *cares* for you, and *compassion* of you in your
danger and misery, doth make the time seem
very long to us; and O what happy men should
we think our selves, if all or the most of our peo-
ple were converted! And when we see but now
and then one come home, we remember no
more the anguish of our fears and sorrows, nor
think all our labour ill bestowed, for ioy that a
Christian is new-born unto Christ. But yet for
all the Mothers joy, her work, and care, and sor-
row is not at an end as soon as she is delivered:
Many a foul hand, and many a troublesom hour,
and many a waking night, she must have with
the child whole birth she so rejoiced in; and
after that, many a year of care and labour to
bring it up, and provide for it in the World;
and in her old age when she expecteth from her
children the love, and honour, [and thanks, and
comfort that was due to her as a Mother, and for
all her labour and care and pains, perhaps one
child will prove kind, and of another she must
take it well that he is not very unkind, and a
third perhaps may break her heart: And yet she
must still be a Mother to them all. And so it
befalls us; when we have greatly rejoiced at the
real or seeming Conversion of now and then one
of our hearers, our work with them is not at an
end, nor may we lay aside our care and labour
for them. We have for some years (usually)
the *Nurses* work to do; and many a troublesom
day and night, the weakness, the uncleanness,
the

the peevish childish exceptions, the querulous and quarrellous disposition of our beloved Converts, will put us to: And after all that, when they begin to go on their own legs, and think themselves sufficient for themselves without our help, many a fall and hurt they may catch, and many fallings out may they have with one another, to the great trouble of themselves & us: And when they are grown up to strength of parts and gifts, some that seemed sincere may turn Prodigals or Apostates, and some fall a quarrelling about the inheritance, and make most woful divisions in Christs Family; and some perhaps despise us that have thus spent our dayes and strength, in Studies, and Prayers, and fears, and cares and labours for their Salvation; yea perhaps be ready to spit in our faces, and reproach our persons, yea and our very Office and Calling it self, as the experience of these times of ours, seconding the experience of all ages of the Church before us, doth alas too evidently and openly testify. And yet some will be faithful and constant and thankful to Christ and us. And that all might be so (for Christs sake, and for their own) must still be our care and desires, and endeavours. In these several cases we find blessed *Paul* with his children in his Epistles; sometime rejoycing with them in their stedfastness; sometime defending himself and his Ministry against their unkind and childish wranglings; as with the *Corinthians* you may find him: sometime he is put (but seldom) to a severe correction of the obstinate, delivering them up to Satan, for a warning to the rest: sometime he is fain to watch with them, as in their sickness, when they
are

4. *Directions to the Converted, for their*

are infected with some dangerous error, or other disease; and is brought even to make great question of their lives, lest he hath *laboured for them in vain*, and themselves have *run in vain*, and lest they be *fallen from Grace*, and *Christ should profit them nothing*; receiving himself no better requital of all his labours, from them that once would have pulled out their eyes for him, than to be taken *for their enemy because he tells them the truth*, and *the more he loveth them, the less to be loved of them*; as you may read in *Gal. 1. 6, 7. and 3. 1, 3, 4. and 4. 11, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20. and 5. 2, 4, 7.* But with *the most* we find him, as one that is yet between hope and fear of them, directing and exhorting them to spiritual steadfastness, and growth, and perseverance to the end: and this is the work which we here find him upon with the *Colossians* in this Text: which containeth, 1. A supposition of a work (the great work) already done, *viz.* that [*They have received Christ Jesus the Lord*]. 2. An inference of further duty, and exhortation thereto; which in sum is their *confirmation and progress*. The parts of this duty are expressed in several Metaphors. The first is taken from a Tree or other plant, and is called out [*Rooting in Christ*]. After the *Receiving of Christ*, there is a *further Rootedness* in him to be sought. The second is taken from a building, and is called, a [*being built up in him*] as a house is upon the Foundation. All the work is not done when the chief corner stone and Foundation is laid. The third part is taken from those Pillars and stronger parts of the building, which are firm upon the Foundation, and its called, a being [*stablished or confirmed in the faith*].

Establishment, growth, and perseverance. 5

faith]. And having made mention of *Faith*, lest they should hearken to innovations and the conceits of men under *pretence* of *Faith*, he addeth [*as ye have been taught,*] to shew them *what Faith* or Religion it is that they must be established in; even that which by the Apostles they had been taught. And lastly, he expresseth the measure that they should aim at, and one special way in which their *Faith* should be exercised [*abounding therein with thanksgiving.*] The matter is not great, whether we take the Relative to refer to Christ, and read it with the vulgar Latine [*abounding in him with thanksgiving*]: Or as the *Aethiopick* [*abound with thanksgiving to him*]: Or whether we take it as relating to thanksgiving it self, as the *Arabick* Translator, and some Greek Copies have it [*abounding in thanksgiving*] or [*abounding in such thanksgiving*]: Or as the ordinary Greek Copies, and the *Syriack* Translator, referring it to *Faith* [*abounding in it* (that is, in that *Faith*) *with thanksgiving*]. For in the upshot it comes to the same [*to abound in Christ, & to abound in Faith in Christ, & to abound in a believing thanksgiving to Christ*]. And all this is comprehended in one foregoing general of [*walking in Christ*]; the whole life of a Christian being divided into these two parts. *Receiving Christ*, and *walking in him*. Here are these several terms therefore briefly to be opened. 1. What is meant by [*Receiving Christ Jesus the Lord*]. 2. What is meant by *walking in him*. 3. What by *being Rooted in him*. 4. What by *being built up in him*. 5. What by *being confirmed or stablished in the Faith*. 6. What by this directive limitation [*as ye have been taught*]. 7. What by *abounding therein with thank-*

6 *Directions to the Converted, for their
thanksgiving.* And for the first, you must ob-
serve the *act* and the *object*. The *act* is [*Receiving*]:
the *object* is [*Christ Jesus the Lord*]. To Receive
Christ is not only (as some Annotators mistake
it) to *Receive his Doctrine*], though its certain
that his *Doctrine* must be received, and that the
rest is implied in this. But when the *understand-
ing* receiveth the *Gospel* by *Assent*, the *Will* also
Accepteth or *Receiveth Christ* as he is offered, by
Consent: and both these together are the *Receiv-
ing of Christ*; that is, the true justifying Faith of
Gods Elect. It is not therefore a *Physical passive
Reception*, as Wood receiveth the Fire, and as our
Souls receive the Graces of the Spirit; but it is a
Moral Reception, or *Representative*, which is *Active
and Metaphorical*. This will be better under-
stood when the object is considered; which is
[*Christ Jesus the Lord*]. To receive Christ as
Christ, or the Anointed Messiah, and as the Sa-
viour and our Lord, is to *believe that he is such*,
and to *consent that he be such to us*, and to *trust in
him*, and *resign our selves to him as such*. The
Relation we do indeed Receive by a proper pas-
sive Reception; I mean our Relation of being the
Redeemed, Members, Subjects, Disciples of this
Christ. But the person of Christ we only Receive
by such an active, moral, representative Reception, as a
Servant by consent Receives a Master, a Patient by
Consent receives a Physician; a Wife by consent re-
ceives a Husband; and a Schollar or Pupil by
Consent receives a Teacher or Tutor; or the Sub-
jects by Consent receive a Sovereign. So that it
is the same thing that is called [*Receiving Jesus
the Lord*] and [*believing in him*], as it is expound-
ed Job. 1. 12. There are three great observ-
able

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able acts of Faith essential to it; the first is, *Assent to the truth of the Gospel*: the second is, *Consent or Acceptance of Christ and Life as the offered good*: the third is *Affiance in Christ for the accomplishing of the ends of his Office*. Now the word *Faith* doth most properly express the first act and the last; and the word [*Receiving*] doth most properly express the middlemost: but which ever term is used, when it is *Justifying Faith* that is spoken of, *all three* are intended or included: By what hath been said, you may discern whether you have *Received Christ* or not: For your Faith may be known by these acts which are its parts. 1. If you sincerely believe the Gospel to be true; which must be with a belief so strong at least, as that you are resolved to venture your happiness upon this belief, and let go all for the hope that is set before you. 2. If an *offered Christ* in his Relation as a full and perfect Saviour be heartily welcom to you. If you *consent* to the Gospel offer, and are but *truly willing to be his*, and that he be yours in that Relation. *Faith* is not only called a *Receiving of Christ*, but is oft exprest by this term of [*Willing*] him. And therefore the Promise is to [*Whoever will*], *Rev.* 22. 17. and the wicked are denyed a part in Christ, because they *will not have him reign over them*, *Luke* 19. 27. or *Will not come to him that they may have life*, *Joh.* 6. 40. even because they *would none of him*, *Psal.* 81. 11, 12. which is because they are not true Believers or Disciples of Christ. 3. If you thus by consent take Christ for your Saviour, Teacher and Lord, it must needs follow that you *fiducially rely upon him*, or trust him to accomplish the ends of his Relations: that you trust

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trust to him for deliverance, from the guilt and power and punishment of sin, and for quickning, strengthening, and preserving Grace, and for everlasting life, that you resign your selves up to him as his Disciples, to learn of him, with a confidence or trust that he will infallibly teach you the way to happiness. And that you also give up your selves to him as his Subjects, with a Trust that he will govern you in truth and Righteousness, in order to your Salvation, and will defend you from destroying enemies. This much is of the very *Being of Faith*, or [*the Receiving Christ Jesus the Lord*]. And these parts are inseparable: he that hath one in truth, hath all. Whenever we find in Scripture, the Promise of Justification or Salvation made to us, *if we believe*, it is *this believing*, and none but this that is intended. It is not only *believing in Christ as a Sacrifice or Priest*, that is the Faith which Justifieth, and *believing in him as a Teacher or Lord*, that sanctifieth: the effects are not thus parcelled out to several essential parts of this same Faith: but it is this one entire Faith in all these essential parts that is the *undivided condition* of all these benefits; and in that way of a *Condition* of the *free Promise* it doth procure them. So much for the meaning of the first words [*Receiving Christ Jesus the Lord*]. I will be briefer about the next. The second is [*walking in him*], which is no more but the *living as Christians* when once we are become Christians; and *using* that Christ to the ends which we received him for, when once we have received him. Two things are necessary to such as we, that have lost our way: the first is to *get into the right way* (and

(and that is to get into Christ who is the way): the other is to *travel on*, when we are in it: For it is not enough to bring us to our Journeyes end, that we have found out the right way. The next word to be explained is [*rooted*]. Which doth not intimate that any are really planted into Christ without *any rooting* in him at all: but by [*rooted*] is meant [*deeply rooted*]. For the *Roots* increase under ground as well as the Tree above ground. *Rooting* hath two ends, and both are here implied. The first is for the *Firmness* ~~ness~~ of the Tree, that blustering winds may not overturn it. The second is for *nutriment*: that it may receive that nourishment from the earth which may cause its preservation, growth and fruitfulness. This is the *Rootedness* of Christians in Christ, that they may be *confirmed* in him against all assaults, and may *draw from him* that nutriment that is necessary to their growth and fruit. The next term is [*built up in him*]. No house consisteth of a bare Foundation. Five things are expressly contained in our being [*built up in him*]: The first is that we are *united* or *conjoyned* to him, as the building is on the Foundation. The second is, that we *rest wholly on him* as our support, as the building doth on the Foundation. The third is, that we are also *conjoyned one unto another*, and are become one spiritual building in the Lord. The fourth is, that the *Fabrick doth increase in bigness*, as the house doth by being built up: so that it importeth our increase in Grace, and the increase of the Church by us. The fifth is the *fitness of the building to its intended ends and use*: Till it be built up, it is not fit for habitation. And till Christians are built up,

up, God hath not that use of them to which he doth intend them. The next term is [*Stablished or confirmed in the Faith*], which signifyeth but that strengthening and fixing of us that may prevent our fall or shaking. And it compriseth these two things. First that we be *soundly bottomed* on Christ, who is our Foundation. And secondly, that we be *cemented* and firmly joyned to each other. And this comprehendeth their stability in the doctrine of Faith: And therefore he addeth [*as ye have been taught*], to fortify them against Heresies, which indeed are all but *novelities*; that so they may know how to try the Doctrines that afterward should be offered them, and stick fast to that which the Apostles taught. He next requireth them to [*abound therein*] to let them know, that as it is no small matters that they expect by Christ, so they should not rest in small degrees of Grace or duty; but especially the duty of [*Thanksgiving*], which is an Evangelical and celestial duty, and so admirably befits a people that have partaked of such admirable Salvation, and is so suitable to our mercies, and our condition, and Gods just expectation. As it is *Love and Grace* whose eternal praise is designed by the Gospel, and are magnified in the Church by the Redeemers great and blessed work: So it is returns of *Love and Praise and Joy*, that should be the most *abounding or overflowing part of all our Christian affections and performances*. After this explication, you may see that the sense of the Text lyeth plain in this Proposition.

Doct. [*Those that have savingly Received Christ Jesus the Lord, must be so far from resting here*

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Here as if all were done, that they must spend the rest of their dayes in walking in him, being Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the Faith as the Apostles taught it, and abounding in it, especially with joyful praises to our Redeemer].

And because that my design is only to Direct young Christians how they may come to be established and confirmed in Christ, I shall therefore pass over all other things that the full handling of this Text requireth; and shall only give you
1. A short intimation here *what this confirmation and stability is* (which shall be fullyer opened to you in the Directions). 2. And shew you the need of seeking it. And 3. How you may attain it.

1. This Confirmation is the *Habitual strength of Grace*; distinct from present *actual confirmation* by the influence of Grace from God: For though God may in an instant confirm a weak person against some particular temptation, by his free assistance, yet that is not it which we have here to speak of, but *Habitual confirmation* in a *State of Grace*: And ordinarily we may expect that Gods co-operating assisting Grace, should bear some proportion with our *Habitual Grace*: Even as in nature he concurrerth with the *strongest men* to do greater works than he causeth the *weak* to do; and with the *wisest men* to understand more than the *foolish* do: I say but that *Ordinarily* it is thus.

A *Confirmed Christian* as contrary to a *weak one*,
1. Is not to be judged of by his freedom from all scruples, doubts or fears.
2. Nor by his eminency in *mens esteems* or observation.
3. Nor by his strength of *Memory*.

4. Or freedom of utterance in Praying, Preaching, or Discourse. 5. Or by his seemly deportment and courtesy towards others. 6. Nor by his sedate calm and lovely temper, and freedom from some hast and heats which other tempers are more prone to. 7. Nor by a Man-pleasing or dissembling faculty to bridle the tongue when it would open the corruption of the mind, and to suppress all words which would make others know how bad the heart is. There are many endowments laudable and desirable which will not shew so much as *sincerity in Grace*; and much less a state of Confirmation and stability.

But Confirmation lyeth in the great degree of all those Graces which *Constitute a Christian*. And the great degree appeareth in the operations of them. As 1. When Holiness is as a *New-nature* in us, and giveth us a *Promptitude* to holy actions; and maketh us *free and ready* to them, and maketh them *easy and familiar* to us: Whereas the *weak* go *heavily*, and can scarce drive on and force their minds. 2. When there is a *constancy or frequency* of holy actions: which sheweth the strength and stability of *holy inclinations*. 3. When they are *powerful to bear down oppositions and temptations*, and can get over the greatest impediments in the way, and make an advantage of all resistance, and despise the most splendid baits of sin. 4. When it is still *getting ground*, and *drawing the Soul upward*, and nearer to God, its Rest and End. And when the heart groweth more *Heavenly and Divine*, and stranger to *Earth and earthly things*. 5. And when holy and heavenly things are more *sweet and delightful* to the Soul, and are sought and used with
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more *Love* and *pleasure*. All these do shew that the *Operations* of *Grace* are vigorous and *strong*; and consequently that the *Habits* are so also.

And this *confirmation* should be found, 1. In the *Understanding*. 2. In the *Will*. 3. In the *Affections*. 4. In the *Life*.

1. When the *Mind* of man hath a *larger comprehension* of the *Truths* of *God*, and the *Order* and *Method* and *Usefulness* of every truth ! And a *deeper apprehension* of the *certainly* of them, and of the *Goodness* of the matter expressed in them ! When *Knowledge* and *Faith* come nearest unto sight or intention, and we have the *fullist*, the *truest*, and the *firmest* and most *certain* apprehension of things revealed and unseen ; when the *Nature* and the *Reasons*, and the *ends* and *benefits* of the *Christian Religion* are all most *clearly*, *orderly*, *decently*, *constantly* and *powerfully* printed on the mind, then is that *Mind* in a *Confirmed* state.

2. When the *Will* is guided by such a *confirmed understanding*, and is not brutishly resolved, he knoweth not for what or why ! When *Light* hath fixed it in such *Resolutions* as are past all notable doubtings, deliberations, waverings, or unwilling backwardness : and a man is in seeking *God* and his *Salvation*, and avoiding known sin, as a natural man is about the questions, whether he should *preserve his Life* ? and make *provision* for it ? and whether he should *poison*, or *famish*, or *torment himself* ? When the *Inclination* of the *Will* to *God* and *Heaven* and *Holiness*, are likest to its natural *Inclination* to *Good* as *Good*, and to its *own felicity* ! And its action is so free as to have *Least Indeterminati-*

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on, and to be likest to *Natural necessary acts*, as those are of blessed Spirits in Heaven! When the least intimation from God prevaleth, and the *Will* doth answer him with *readiness*, and *delight*! And when it taketh pleasure to trample upon all opposition; and when all that can be offered to corrupt the heart, and draw it to sin, and loosen it from God, prevaleth but as so much filth and dung would do (*Phil. 3. 7, 8, 9.*), This is a confirmed state of Will.

3. When the *Affections* do proceed from such a *Will*; and are ready to assist, excite and serve it; and to carry us on in necessary Duties! When the lower affections of *Fear* and *sorrow* do *cleanse* and *restrain* and *prepare* the way, and the Higher Affections of *Love*, and *Delight* adhere to God, and *Desire* and *Hope* do make out after him, and set the Soul on just endeavours: When *Fear* and *Grief* have less to do, and are delivering up the heart still more and more to the possession of Holy *Delight* and *Love*! And when those Affections, which are rather *Profound* than very *sensible*, immediately towards *God himself*, are sensible towards his *Word*, his *Servants*, his *Graces* and his *wayes*, and against all sin; Then are the *Affections*, and so the *man* in a *confirmed State*:

4. When our selves, our time, and all that we have, are taken to be *Gods*, and not our own, and are entirely, and unreservedly resigned to him, and used for him; When we study our duty, and trust him for our reward: When we live as those that have much more to do for Heaven than for earth, and with God than with Man or any Creature: When our *Consciences*
are

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are absolutely subjected to the Authority and Laws of God; and bow not to Competitors: When we are habitually disposed as his *Servants* to be constantly imployed in his *Works*, and make it our *Calling* and *business* in the world; as judging that we have nothing to do on earth, but *with God*, or *for God*: When we keep not up any secret desires and hopes of a *Worldly felicity*; nor purvey for the pleasure of the *Flesh*, under the cloak of *Faith* and *Piety*; but *subdue* the *Flesh* as our most dangerous enemy; and can *easily deny* its *appetite* and *concupiscence*: When we guard all our *senses*, and keep our *passions*, *thoughts*, and *tongues*, in obedience to the holy Law: When we do not inordinately *set up* our *selves* in our *esteem* or *desire*, above or against our Neighbour and his welfare; but love him as our selves, and seek his good, and resist his hurt as heartily as our own; and love the godly with a love of Complacence, and the ungodly with a love of Benevolence, though they be our enemies: When we are faithful in all our Relations, and have judgment to discern our duty, that we run not into extreams; and skill and readiness and pleasure in performing it, and patience under all our sufferings; this is the Life of a *confirmed Christian* (in various degrees, as their strength is various).

And now I shall proceed to perswade such to value and seek this confirmation, lest with dull unprepared minds my following Directions should be lost; and then I shall give you the Directions themselves, which are the part that is principally intended. And first for the Motives.

1. Consider that *your first entrance into Christia-*

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nity is an engagement to proceed: your Receiving
Christ obligeth you to walk and grow up in him.
A fourfold obligation your very Christianity lay-
eth upon you, to grow stronger, and to persevere.
1. The first is, *from the very nature of it; even*
from the Office of Christ, and the use and ends to
which we do receive him. You receive Christ
as a *Physician* of your diseased Souls; and doth
not this engage you to go on to use his Medi-
cines till you are cured? What do men choole a
Physician for, but to heal them? It were but a
foolish patient that would say, [*Though my disease*
be deadly, yet now I have chosen the best Physician, I
have no more to do; I doubt not of recovery]. You
took Christ for a *Saviour*, which engageth you
to use his saving means, and submit to his sa-
ving works. You took him for your *Teacher*
and *Master*; and gave up your selves to be his
Disciples: and what sense was in all this if you
did not mean to proceed in learning of him. Its
a silly conceit for any man to think that he is a
good Schollar, merely because he hath chosen a good
Master or *Tutor*, without any further learning of
him. When Christ sent out his Apostles, it was
for these two works: first to *Disciple Nations,*
and *Baptise them*; and then to *go on in Teaching*
them to observe all things whatsoever he command-
eth them. Matth. 28. 19, 20. Christ is the way to
the Father: but to what purpose did you come
into this way, if you meant not to travel on in
it?

2. Moreover when you became Christians,
you entered a *solemn Covenant* with Christ; and
bound your selves by a *vow*, to be faithful to
him to the death: And *this Vow* is upon you:
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It is better not to Vow, than to Vow and not perform.
Eccles. 5. 5. In taking him to be the *Captain* of your Salvation, and listing your selves under him, and taking this Oath of fidelity to him, you did engage your selves to *fight* as faithful Souldiers, under his conduct and command to your lives end. And as its a foolish Souldier that thinks that he hath no more to do, but list himself and take Colours, and need not fight; so it is a foolish and ungodly *Covenanter* that thinks he hath nothing to do but to *Promise*; and may be excused from *performance* because that *Promising* was enough; when the Promise was purposely to bind him to perform.

3. Moreover, when you became Christians, you put your selves under the *Laws of Christ*: and these *Laws* require you to go further till you are confirmed; so that you must go on, or renounce your obedience to Christ.

4. Lastly, when you became Christians, you *received such exceeding Mercies*, as do oblige you to go much higher in your affections, and much further in your obedience to God. A man that is newly snatcht as from the jaws of Hell, and hath received the free forgiveness of his sins, and is put into such a state of blessedness as we are, must needs feel abundance of obligations upon him, to proceed to stronger resolutions and affections, and not to stop in those low beginnings. So that if you lay these four things together, you will perceive that the very purpose of your *Receiving Christ* was that you might *walk in him*, and be *confirmed and built up*.

2. Consider also, that your *Conversion* is not sound if you are not heartily desirous to *increase*.

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Grace is not true, if there be not a desire after more; yea if you *desire* not *perfection* it self. An Infant is not born to continue an Infant, for that were to be a Monster; but to grow up unto Manhood. As the Kingdom of Christ in the *Word* is likened by him to a *little Leaven*, and to a *grain of Mustard-seed*, in the beginning, which alterward makes a wonderful increase; so his Kingdom in the *Soul* is of the same nature too. If you are contented with that measure of holiness that you have, you have none at all, but a shadow and conceit of it. Let those men think of this that stint themselves in Holiness, and plead for a Moderation in it, as if it were intemperance or fury to love God or fear him or seek him or obey him, any more than they do; or as if we were in danger of excess in these: If ever these men had feelingly, and by experience known what Holiness is, they would never have been possessed with such conceits as these.

3. Consider, What *abundance of labour hath been lost, and what hopes have been frustrate, for want of proceeding to a Rooted Confirmation*. I say not that such were *truly sanctified*: but, I say, they were in a very hopeful way, and went far, and by going further might have attained to Salvation. The heart of many a Minister hath been glad to see their Hearers humbled, and bewailing sin, and changing their minds and lives, and becoming forward Professors of Godliness; when a few years time hath turned all this joy into sorrow: and *one* of our hopeful seeming Converts doth grow cold, and lose his former forwardness; *another* falls to desperate sensuality, and turns Drunkard, or Fornicator, or Gamester;

ster; another turns worldling, and drowneeth all his seeming zeal in the love of Riches, and the cares of this life; and another (if not many to one) is deluded by some deceiver, and infected with some deadly errors; and casts off duty, and sets himself, like a hired instrument of Hell, to divide the Church, oppose the Gospel, and reproach and slander and rail at the Ministers and Professors of it, and to weaken the hands of the Builders, and strengthen the ungodly, and serve the secret enemies of the truth. Those that once comforted our hearts in the hopes of their *Conversion*, do break our hearts by their *Apostacy* and *subversion*, and become greater hinderances to the work of Christ, and greater Plagues to the Church of God, than those that never professed to be Religious. Those that were wont to joyn with us in holy worship, and went up with us to the house of God as our companions, do afterwards despise both Worshipers and Worship. Whereas if these men had been *'rooted and confirmed*, you should never have seen them fall into this misery. O how many Prayers, and Confessions, and Duties do these men lose? How many years have some of them seemed to be Religious; and after all have proved Apostate miscreants; and the World, and the Flesh, and Pride and Error swallow up all. See then what need you have to be *rooted, confirmed, and built up in Christ*.

4. Consider also, *How much of the Work of your Salvation is yet to do, when you are Converted*. You have happily begun; but you have not finished. You have hit of the right way, but you have your Journey yet to go; you have chosen the best

best Commander, and fellow Souldiers : but you have many a Battle yet to fight. If you are Christians indeed, you know your selves that you have many a corruption to resist and conquer, and many a temptation yet to overcome, and many a necessary work to do? And there is a necessity of these after-works as well as of the first. For these are the use and end of your conversion, that you may *live soberly righteously and godly in this present World, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts*, Tit. 2. 11, 12. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God hath ordained that we should walk in them, Eph. 2. 10. And how can Infants go through all these works? Which of you would desire an Infant or Cripple to be your servant? But though God be in this more merciful than man, yet he may well expect that you should not be still Infants. What work are you like to make him, in this decrepit and weak condition? O pittiful blindness! that any man that knows that he hath a Soul to save, should think an Infant-strength proportionable to those works and difficulties that stand between him and everlasting Life! In the matters of this Life, you feel the need and worth of strength: you will not think an Infant fit to Plow or Sow, or Reap or Mow, or Travel or play the Souldier! and yet will you rest satisfied with an Infant-strength, to do those great and matchless works, which your Salvation lyeth on?

5. Moreover, the weak unconfirmed Souls, are usually full of trouble, and live without that assurance of Gods love, and that spiritual peace and comfort, which others do possess. One would think no other

other Argument should be necessary to make men weary of their spiritual weaknesses and Diseases than the *pain and trouble* that alwayes attendeth them. Its more pain to a sick man to travel a mile, than to a sound man to go ten. To the lame or feeble, every step bath pain, and all that they do is grievous to them : when far more would be a *recreation* to one that is in *health*. O therefore delight not in your own languishings ! Choose not to live in pain and sorrow ! But strive after *Confirmation* and growth in Grace ; that overgrowing your infirmities you may overcome your sad complaints and groans, and may be acquainted with the *comfortable* life of the *Confirmed*. O how roundly and cheerfully would you go through your work ! how easy and sweet and profitable would it prove to you, if once you were *strong confirmed* Christians ! Alas, the Souls of those that are not confirmed, lye open to every temptation of the malicious enemy of their peace : and how small a matter will disquiet and unsettle them ! every *passage in Scripture which they understand not*, and which seems to make against them, will disturb them. A Minister cannot *Preach* so plainly or so cautiously, but somewhat which they *understand not* will be matter of their disquiet. *Providences* will trouble them because they *understand them not* : *Afflictions* will be bitter to the mind as well as the body, and will immoderately perplex them, because they *understand them not*, or have not strength to bear them and improve them. The sweeter mercies of prosperity will much lose their sweetness for want of holy Wisdom and strength to digest them. And what man would
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choose such a weak and languishing state as this, before a confirmed healthful state? Will you run up and down for Physick when you are sick? and will you no more regard the health and stability, and spiritual peace and vigour of your souls?

6. Moreover, it is the *strong confirmed Christian* that hath the true use and benefit of all Gods ordinances: Meat is digested by the healthful stomach; and its *seen* upon them; and we use to say, *It is not lost*: It is *sweet* to them, and doth them good; and they are strengthened more by it. And so is the *confirmed* Christian by Gods Ordinances. But to the weak unconfirmed Soul, how much of the means of Grace is even as lost? How little sweetness do they find in means? and how little good can they say they get by them? I deny not but *some* good they get, and that they must *use* them still; for though the sick have little relish of his meat, yet he cannot long live without it: and though it breed not strength or health, yet it maintaineth that languishing life: but this is all, or almost all. What a sad thing is this to your selves, and unto us! when Ministers that are as the Nurses of the Church, or Stewards of the Household to give them all their meat in due season, must see that all that ever they can do for you, will do no more than keep you alive? Yea, how often are you quarrelling with your food; and you do not like it? or you cannot get it down, something still ails it for matter or manner: or else if the Minister displease you, your feeble stomachs do loath the food, because you like not the Cook that dresseth it, or because his hands are not so clean

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as you desire. *The full Soul loatheth an Honey-comb, but to the hungry every bitter thing is sweet,* Prov. 27. 7. Or if you get it down, you can hardly keep it, but are ready to cast it up to our faces. And thus a great deal of our labour is lost with you: holy Doctrine lost, and Sacraments and other Ordinances lost, because you have not strength to digest them. Labour therefore to be *stablished and built up.*

7. I beseech you *look upon the face of the World,* and see whether it have not need of the strongest help? Whereas the weak and sick are burthensome to others, rather than fit to help the distressed. It is a *multitude* among us, and abroad in the world, that are ignorant and ungodly and in the depth of misery: And if there be but a *few* to help them, those *few* should not be *Babes*. Abundance of this multitude are obstinate in their sin, blind and wilful, captivated by the Devil, and have sold themselves to do evil: and shall such miserable Souls as these have none but *children or sick folks* to help them. I tell you Sirs, their Diseases prove too hard for the skillfullest Physicians: It will put the wisest man in *England* to it, to perswade one obstinate enemy of godliness, to the hearty love of a holy life; or to cure one old superstitious person of his self-conceitedness; or one covetous person of his love of the World; or one old drunkard or glutton of his sensuality. How then will silly ignorant Christians be able to perswade them? I know it is not the ability of the Instrument, but the will of God that is the principal cause; but yet God useth to work by instruments according to their fitness for the work. What a case is that Hospital in where
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all are sick, and no healthful persons among them to help them? Poor weak Christians! you are not able much to help *one another*; how much less to help the dead ungodly World? Wo to the World if it had no better helpers! And wo to your selves if you had not the help of stronger than your selves (seeing it is Gods way to work by means.) Alas, a child or sick person is so unfit to labour for the Family, and to work for others, that they are the burdens of the Family, and must be provided for by others. They are so unmeet to help others in their weakness, that they must be carried, or attended and waited on themselves. What a Life is this to be the burdens of the Church, when you might be the Pillars of the Church? To be so blind and lame, when you might be eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame.

I speak not this to extenuate Gods mercies to you; nor to undervalue the great felicitie of the Saints, even the poorest and weakest of them. I know that Christ is tender of the weakest that are sincere, and will not forsake them. But though you are so far above the dead world, even in the bed of your groaning and languishing, yet O how far are you below the Confirmed healthful Christian? You are happy in being *alive*, but you are unhappy in being so *diseased* and *weak*. You are happy in being of the *Family*, and fellow-Citizens with the Saints; But you are unhappy in being so *useless* and unprofitable and burdensom: For indeed you live but as the *Poor of the Parish*; not only on the *Alms of Christ*, for so we do all; but on the *Alms of your brethren* assistance and support: And I know that
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in worldly matters you will rather labour with your hands, that you may have to give to them that need, than be troublesome to others, and live upon Charity, Eph. 4. 28. I know that the time is not yet come that there shall not be a Beggar in Israel; I mean one that needs not our continual relief: *The poor we shall have always with us*; even the poor in Grace to exercise our Charity; and I know that *the strong must bear with their infirmities*, and exercise compassion on them. But yet you should remember the words of Christ, *It is more honourable to give than to receive*. And therefore be perswaded to bestir your selves for spiritual health and strength and riches, that the multitudes of needy miserable Souls may have some help from you; and that when they come to your doors, you may not turn them away with so cold an answer, [*Alas, we have nothing for our selves*] Were you but strong confirmed Christians, what blessings might you be to all about you? What a stay to the places where you live? *Your lips would feed many as a Tree of Life. The ear that heard you would bless you, and the eye that saw you would bear you witness*, Job 29. 11. You would be to poor Souls, as bountiful Rich men are to their bodies; the support and relief of many that are needy. You would not eat your morsels alone, nor would you see any perish for lack of cloathing, but the layns of the poor would bless you, Job 31. 17, 18, 19, 20. Oh pity the poor World that needeth more than Childrens help, and grow up unto Confirmation. O pity the poor Church that abounds with weaklings, that is pestered with childish self-conceited quarrellers, and needeth more than childrens help; and grow up to confirmation

firmation. O pity *your selves* and live not still in so childish, sickly, and beggarly a condition, when the way of riches and health is before you: but up and be doing till you have attained confirmation.

8. Yea this is not all; you do not only deny the Church your assistance, but *most of the troubles and divisions of the Church, are from such unseparated weaklings as you.* In all Ages almost, these have made the Church more work than the Heathen Persecutors did with Fire and Sword. These *Novices*, as *Paul* calleth them, that is; *young beginners in Religion*, are they that most commonly are *puffed up with Pride*, and fall into the condemnation of the Devil, 1 Tim. 3. 6. These are they that are easiest deceived by Seducers, as being not able to make good the truth, nor to confute the plausible reasonings of the adversaries; and withall, they have not that *rooted love* to the Truth and wayes of God, which should hold them fast; and they quickly *yield* like cowardly Souldiers, that are able to make but small resistance. And as *Paul* speaks, they are *like children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lye in wait to deceive*, Eph. 4. 14. If you will still continue children, what better can we expect of you, but thus to be *tols'd* and carried about. Thus you gratify Satan and Seducers, when you little think on it: And thus you harden the ungodly in their way: And thus you grieve the hearts of the godly, and especially of the Faithful guides of the Flocks. Alas that so many of the children of the Church, should become the scourges and troublers of the Church;

Church; and should set their roots so deep in the breasts that were drawn out for their nourishment! If you were never drawn to do any thing to the reproach of the Church, yet what a grief must it be to us, to see so many of your selves miscarry? Ah thinks a poor Minister, *What hopes had I once of these Professors; and are they come to this?* O mark Sirs the Apostle's warning, Heb. 13. 9. [*Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines*]. And his way of prevention is, *that the heart be established with Grace*.

9. Consider also that it is a dishonour to Christ, that so many of his Family should be such weaklings; so mutable and unsettled and unprofitable as you are! I do not mean that it is any real dishonour to him; for it all the World should forsake him, they would dishonour themselves and not him, with any competent Judge: As it would dishonour the beholders more than the Sun, if all the world should say that it is darkness. But you are guilty of dishonouring him in the eyes of the misguided world: O what a reproach it is to Godliness that so many Professors should be so ignorant and imprudent! and so many so giddy and unconstant! and so many that manifest so little of the glory of their holy Profession! All the enemies of Christ without the Church, are not capable of dishonouring him so much as you, that bear his Name and wear his Livery! While your Graces are weak your corruptions will be strong; and all those corruptions will be the dishonour of your Profession. Will it not break your hearts to hear the ungodly pointing at you, as you pass by, to say, yonder goes a Covetous Professor; or yonder goes a proud, or a tipling,

or a contentious Professor? If you have any love to God, and sense of his dishonour, methinks such sayings should touch you at the heart! While you are weak and unconfirmed, you will like children, stumble at every stone, and catch many a fall; and yield to temptations, which the stronger easily resist: and then being scandalous, all your faults by foolish men will be charged on your Religion. If you do but speak an ill word of another, or rail, or deceive, or over-reach in bargaining, or fall into any scandalous Opinions or practice, your Religion must bear all the blame with the World. Ever since I can remember, it hath been one of the principal hinderances of mens Conversion, and strengtheners of the wicked in their way, that the Godly were accounted a sort of peevish, unpeaceable, covetous, proud, self-seeking persons: which was a slander as to many, but too much occasioned by the scandalousness of some: And methinks you should be afraid of that *Wo* from Christ [*Wo be to him by whom offence cometh*]. If you be *Children*, you may have the *Wo* of sharp castigations; and if you be *Hypocrites*, you shall have the *Wo* of everlasting sufferings. The world can judg no farther than they see: And when they see Professors of Holiness to be so like to common men, and in some things worse than many of them, what can you expect but that they despise Religion, and judg of it by the Professors of it, and say, *If this be their Religion, let them keep it to themselves; we are as well without it as they are with it.* And thus will the holy waies of God be vilified through you. If you will not excel others in the beauty of your conversations, that

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that in this glass the World may see the beauty of your Religion, you must expect that they should take it but for a common thing which bringeth forth but common fruits, to their discerning. You should be such that God may *boast* of, and the Church may *boast* of, to the face of the accuser: then would you be an honour to the Church, when God may say of you as he did of Job, [*Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil*] Job 1. 8. If we could say so of you to the malignant enemies, [*See what men the godly are, there is none such among you; men of Holiness, Wisdom, uprightness, sobriety, meekness, patience, peaceable and harmless, living wholly to God, as strangers on earth, and Citizens of Heaven*], then you would be ornaments to your holy profession. Were you such Christians as the old Christians were, *Act. 4.* we might boast of you then to the reproaching adversaries.

10. Moreover, till you are confirmed and built up, you may too easily be made the instruments of Satan, to further his designs. The weakness of your understandings, and the strength of your passions, and especially the interest that carnal Self hath remaining in you, may lay you open to temptations, and engage you in many a cause of Satan, to take his part against the truth. And how sad a case is this to any that have felt the love of Christ! Have you been warmed with his wondrous love, and washed with his blood, and saved by his matchless mercy? and may it not even break your hearts, to think that after all this, you should be drawn by Satan to wound

your Lord, to abuse his honour, to resist his cause, to hurt his Church, and to confirm his enemies, and gratify the Devil! I tell you with shame and griet of heart, that abundance of weak unsettled Professors, that we hope have upright meanings in the main, have been more powerful instruments for Satan to do his work by, for the hindering of the Gospel, the vilitying of the Ministry, the dividing of the Church, and the hindering of Reformation, than most of the notoriously prophane have been! What excellent hopes had we once in *England* of the flourishing of piety and happy union among the Churches and servants of Christ? And who hath not only frustrated these hopes, but almost broke them all to pieces? Have any had more to do in it than weak unstable Professors of Religiousness. What sad confusions are most parts of *England* in at this day, by reason of the breaking of Churches into Sects and shreds, and the contentions and reproaches of Christians against Christians, and the odious abuse of holy truth and Ordinances! And who is it that doth this, so much as unstable Professors of Piety! What greater reproach almost could have befallen us, than for the adversary to stand by, and see men pulling out each others Throats? and hating and persecuting and reproaching one another; and that our own hands should pull down the house of God, and tear in pieces the miserable Churches while men are striving who shall be the Master of the Reformation? O what a sport is this to the Devil, when he can set his professed enemies by the ears, and make them fall upon one another? when if he have any notable work to do
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against the Church and cause of Christ, he can call out unstable Christians to do it ! If he would have Godliness be *scandalized*, who hath he to do it but Professors of Godliness ? Some of them to *give* the scandal, and others to *aggravate* and *drawlge* it. Would he have a *Church divided* ? how quickly doth he find a bone of contention ? and who should do it but the unstable Members of it ? Would he have the *truth opposed*, and error and darkness to be promoted ? who must do it but Professors of the truth ? persuade some of them that truth is error, and error is truth, and the work will be done : They will furiously march out against their Master, and think they do him service while they are fighting against him, and scorning, and shaming, if not killing his Servants. Would he have *publick divisions maintained* among all the Churches of the World ? It is but possessing the weaker unstable Pastors and people, with a perverse zeal for meer words and notions, as if the life of the Church did therein consist ; and they will be the Devils instruments at a beck, and carry it perhaps by the major vote ; and all that will not *Word* it as they, shall be called Hereticks, and the Church shall have new Articles added to their Faith, under pretence of preserving and expounding the old ones. And thus when Satan hath a work to do, if Heathens and Infidels cannot do it, it is no more but call out Christians to do it : If Drunkards and malignant enemies cannot do it, it is but calling out some unstable Professors of Godliness to do it, and possessing the more injudicious part of the Pastors with some carnal ends, or blind consuming zeal.

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O Christians! in the Name of God, as you would avoid these devilish imployments, labour for confirming strengthening Grace; and rest not in your childish weakness and instability. If you are delivered from Satan, and have truly renounced him, and tasted the great Salvation of Christ, methinks you should even tremble to consider what a thing it would be, if after all this, you should prove through your weakness, so serviceable to the Devil, and so injurious to your dearest Lord! what! must those abuse him whom he hath Redeemed from damnation? Must those hands be employed to demolish his Kingdom, that were washed by him, and should have built it up? As if you were like Judas, that even now hath his hand with his Master in the dish, and presently lifts it up against him!

II. Moreover, while you are weaklings and unconfirmed, you will exceedingly encourage the ungodly in their false hopes, by being so like them as you are. When they see that you excel them so little, and in many things are as bad or worse than they, it strongly perswadeth them that *their state is as good as yours*, and that they may be saved as well as others, seeing the difference seemeth to be so small. They know that Heaven and Hell are much unlike, and vastly distant; and therefore they will hardly believe that they must be thrust into Hell, when men that seem so little to differ from them must go to Heaven. You would not believe how it hardeneth them in their sin when they see Professors do as bad! and how it setleth them in presumption and impenitency to perceive your faults! When a Minister hath laboured to make the sins of the ungodly

godly odious to him, and to break his heart with the terrors of the Lord, O how it quieteth him, and healeth all again, to see the like sins, or others as bad, in the Professors of Religion! *If these, saith he, may be saved, for all such and such sins, what cause have I to fear!* O wretched unprofitable scandalous Professors! when we have studied and Preach'd for mens Conversion many a year, you go and undo all that we have done, by the scandal or levity or imprudence of an hour! When we have *almost* perswaded men to be Christians, you unperswade them, and turn them back again, and do more harm by the weakness and scandal of your lives, than many of us can do good by life and Doctrine: When we have brought sinners even to the door of life, you prove their enemies, and take them out of our hands again, and bring them back to their old captivity. Doth it not pierce your very hearts to think on it, that ever one soul, much more so many, should be shut out of glory, and burn in everlasting misery, and you should have a hand in it? Consider of this, and methinks you should desire confirming Grace.

12. And methinks it *should be very grievous to you, to be so like to the ungodly your selves, and that Satan should still have so much interest in you.* Holiness is Gods Image; and doth it not grieve you that you are so little like him! By his Graces he keeps possession of you: and doth it not grieve you that God hath no more possession of you; but that Satan and sin should so defraud him of his own! Will he condescend to dwell in so low a worm, so oft defiled with the dung of his iniquities; and doth it not wound you to

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think that even there he should be so straitned, and thrust into corners, by a hellish enemy, as if that simple habitation were too much for him, and that dirty dwelling were too good for him! and as if you grudged him so much of the leavings of Satan, that had taken up the beginning of your dayes in sin!

Your corruption is the very image of the Devil, and doth it not affright you to think that you should be so like him! You are charged not to be conformed to this World, but to be transformed or metamorphosed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, that acceptable and perfect will of God, Rom. 12. 2. And yet will you stop in a state so like to those that perish? He that hath the least measure of saving Grace, is likest to the children of the Devil of any man in the world that is not one of them. Seek therefore to increase.

13. And I beseech you consider that your excellency, and the glory and lustre of your Graces, is one of Gods appointed means for the honour of his Son and Gospel, and Church, and for the Conviction and Conversion of the unbelieving World: And therefore if you use not this means, you rob God and the Church of that which is their due, and deprive sinners of one of the means of their Salvation. You are commanded to let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven, Matth. 5. 16. Christians be awakened in the name of God to consider what you have to do with your Graces! you have the living God to please and honour by them! As the excellency of the work doth honour the Workman, so must your Graces and
lives

lives honour God. You have the Souls of the weak to confirm by your lives, and the Souls of the ungodly to win by your lives. You should all be Preachers, and even Preach as you go up and down in the World, as a Candle lighteth which way ever it goeth. As we are sent to save sinners as *Ambassadors* of Christ, by publick *Proclamation* of his Will; so are you sent to save them as his *Servants* and *our helpers*, and must Preach by your *lives* and *familiar exhortations*, as we must do by *authoritative instruction*. A good life is a good Sermon; yea those may be won by *your Sermons*, that will not come to ours; or will not obey the Doctrine which they hear. Even to women that must keep silence in the Church, doth *Peter* command this way of Preaching, *1 Pet. 3. 1, 2. That if any of them have Husbands that obey not the Word, they may without the Word be won by the conversation of the Wives.*] Thousands can understand the meaning of a good life, that cannot understand the meaning of a good Sermon! By this way you may Preach to men of all Languages, though your tongues had never learnt but one: For a holy, harmless, humble life, doth speak in all the Languages of the World to men that have eyes to read it: This is the *Universal Character* and Language, in which all sorts may perceive you speak the wondrous works of the Holy Ghost: I charge you therefore Christians, deprive not God of the honour you owe him, nor the Church, or Souls of wicked men of this excellent powerful help which you owe them, by continuing in your weakness and unsettled minds, and spotted lives; but grow up to that measure that may be fit for such a work.

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As you durst not silence the Preachers of the Gospel, so do not dare to silence your selves from Preaching by your holy exemplary lives: And alas, do you think that feeble, giddy, scandalous Professors are like to do any great matters by their Lives! Would you wish the poor World to write after such a crooked and blotted Copy? Will it win mens hearts to a love of Holiness, to talk with a Christian that can scarce speak a word of sense for his Religion! or to see a Professor as greedy for a little gain as the veryest worldling that hath no other hope! or to hear them rail, or lye, or slander! Or to see them turn up and down like a Weather-cock according as the Wind of temptation sits! and to follow every new Opinion that is but put off with a plausible servency. Do you think that men are like to be won by such lives as these?

14. *Do you consider what great things you must make account to suffer for Christ? You must forsake all that you have, Luke 14. 33. You must not save your lives if he bid you lose them, Matth. 16. 25. You must suffer with him, if you will be glorified with him, Rom. 8. 17. You may be called to confess Christ before the Kings or Judges of the earth; and then if you deny him he will deny you, and if you be ashamed of him he will be ashamed of you, (unless you be brought to a better state) Luk. 9. 26. Mark 8. 38. You may be called to the fiery tryal, and to suffer also the spoiling of your goods, and in a word, the loss of all. And do you think that you shall not find use for the strongest Graces then! Have you not need to be confirmed rooted Christians that must expect such storms! Are Infants meet for such encounters?*

Have

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Have you not seen how many that seemed strong have been overthrown in a time of tryal? And yet will you stop in a weak estate. Perhaps you'll say, *We cannot stand by our own strength; and therefore Christ may uphold the weakest, when the strongest may fall.* To which I answer, Its true: but it is Gods common way to work by means, and to imitate nature in his works of Grace; and therefore he useth to root and strengthen those that he will have to stand and conquer; yea, and to arm them as well as strengthen them, and then to teach them to use their arms, Eph. 6. 10, 11, 12, 13. *Finally my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might: put on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil. For we wrestle not against Flesh and Blood, but against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the darkness of this World, against spiritual wickedness in high places: Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*] You must look when you are illuminated, to endure a great fight of afflictions; to be made a gazing stock both by reproaches and afflictions, and to be companions of them that are so used: and therefore you have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, you may receive the Promise, Heb. 10. 32, 33, 36. If you will endure in the time of persecution, the Word must take deep rooting in your hearts, Matth. 13. 5, 20, 21. and you must be founded on a Rock, if you look to stand in time of storms, Matth. 7. 24, 25.

In the mean time, it is a fearful thing to see in what a wavering condition you seem to stand; like a Tree that shakes, as if it were even falling;
or

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or like a cowardly Army that are ready to run before they fight; and like cowardly Souldiers, you are still looking behind you, and a small matter troubleth, and perplexeth, and staggereth you, as if you were ready to repent of your repentings. And must God have such servants as these, that upon every rumour or word or trouble, are wavering and looking back, and ready to forsake him?

15. Consider also, that *the same Reasons that moved you at first to be Christians, should now move you to be confirmed thriving Christians*: For they are of force as well for this as for that. You would not have mist your part in Christ for all the World (if indeed you have the least degree of Grace). And if the beginning be good and necessary, the increase is neither bad or needless. If a little Grace be desirable, sure more is more desirable. If it was then but a reasonable thing that you should forsake all for Christ and follow him; it is sure as reasonable that you should follow him to the end, till you reach that blessedness which was the end for which at first you followed him. What Christian! hast thou found God a hard Master, a barren Wilderness to thee? or his service an unprofitable thing! say so, and I dare say thou art a bastard (to use the Apostles phrase, *Heb. 12. 8.*) and not a Christian. Sometryal thou hast made of him, What evil hast thou found in him! or what wrong hath he ever done thee! that thou shouldest now begin to make a stand, as if thou were in doubt whether it be best to go further? If *ever* Christ were needful, he is needful still; and if ever heaven and holiness were good, they are good still!
and

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and therefore go on till thou hast obtained more, and forget not the Reasons that first perswaded with thee.

16. Nay more than so, *you have the addition of much experience, which should be an exceeding help to quicken your affections.* When you first Repented and came into Christ, you had never had any experience in your selves of his saving special Grace before; but you came in upon the bare hearing and believing of it: But now you have tasted that the Lord is gracious! and you have received at his hands the pardon of sin, the Spirit of adoption, the hope of glory, which before you had not! You have had many a Prayer answered, and many a deliverance granted; and will you make a stand when all these experiences do call you forward? Should not new Motives and helps thus added to the old, be the means of adding to your zeal and holiness? Surely more wages and encouragement, doth bespeak more work and diligence. And therefore see that you increase.

17. And most of many of you have cause to consider how long you have been already in the Family and School of Christ. If you are but newly entered, I may well exhort you to increase, but I cannot reprove you for not increasing. But alas, what a multitude of dwarfs hath Christ, that are like Infants at twenty or fourty or threescore years of age. What! be so many years in his School, and yet be in the lowest Form. [*For when for the time ye ought to be Teachers, you have need that one teach you again which be the first Principles of the Oracles of God, and are become such as have need of Milk, and not of strong meat: For every one that*
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use *meth* *milk* *is* *unskilful* *in* *the* *word* *of* *Righteousness*: *for* *he* *is* *a* *Babe*: *but* *strong* *meat* *belongeth* *to* *them* *that* *are* *of* *full* *age*, *that* *by* *reason* *of* *use* *have* *their* *senses* *exercised* *to* *discern* *both* *good* *and* *evil*, Heb. 5. 12, 13, 14.] O poor weak diseased Christian! hast thou been so many years beholding the face of God by Faith! and yet art thou no more in love with him than at the first! Hast thou been so long making tryal of his goodness! and dost thou see it and savour it no more than in the beginning! Hast thou been so long under his cure; and art thou no more healed than the first year or day! Hast thou been hearing and talking of Heaven so long; and yet art thou no more heavenly nor ready for Heaven! Hast thou heard and talk'd so much against the World and the Flesh; and yet is the World as high in thee as at first, and the Flesh as strong as in the beginning of thy Profession! O what a sin and shame is this? and what a wrong to God and thee?

Yea consider here also what means thou hast had, as well as what time! O who hath gone beyond thee for power and plenty and purity of Ordinances? or at least how few. Surely few parts of all the earth are like to *England*, for the showers of Heaven, and the Riches of the precious Ordinances of God. You have Sermons till you can scarce desire more! And that so plain that men can scarce tell how to speak plainer: and so earnest, as if the servants of Christ would take no nay: even almost as if *they* must perish if *you* perished. You have as frequent, as plain and powerful Books. You have the warnings and examples of the godly about you. And what yet would you have more! And should a people

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people thus fed be Dwarfs continually? Is ignorance, and dulness, and earthliness, and selfishness, excusable after all these means? Surely first it is but just that God should expect *you* all to be Gyants! even heavenly, grown, confirmed Christians: Whatever others do, it should be so with you.

18. And methinks it should somewhat move you to consider, *how others have thriven in less time, and by smaller means by far than you have had!* and how some of your neighbours can yet thrive by the same means that you so little thrive by. *Job* that was so magnified by God himself, had not such means as you: *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph*, had none of them all such means as you! *Many Prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things that you see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them,* Matth. 13. 17. Though *John Baptist* was greater than any of the Prophets, yet the least of you that are in the Gospel Kingdom, are greater than he, in respect of means. As the times of the Gospel have far clearer light, and give out greater measures of Grace; so the true genuine children of the Gospel should (taking them one with another) be far more confirmed, strong and heavenly, than those that were under the darker and scantier administrations of the Promise.

And do you not see and hear how far you are outstript by many of your poor Neighbours, that are as low in natural parts, and as low in the world, and the esteem of men as you. How many (in this place I dare boldly speak it) do shine before you in knowledg, and meekness, and patience, and a blameless upright life; in fervent prayers,

prayers, and a heavenly conversation! Men that have had as much need to look after the World as you! and no longer time to get these qualifications; and no other means but what you have had, or might have had as well as they. And now they shine as stars in the Church on earth, while you are like sparks, if not like clods. I know that God is the free disposer of his graces; but yet he so seldom faileth any (even in degrees) that be not wanting to themselves, that I may well ask you, why you might not have reached to some more eminency, as well as these about you, if you had but been as careful and industrious as they?

19. Consider also, *That your holiness is your personal perfection, and that of the same kind you must have in glory, though not in the same degree.* And therefore if you be not desirous of its increase, it seems you are out of love with your souls, and with Heaven it self: And when you cease to grow in Holiness, you cease to go on any further to Salvation. If you would indeed your selves be perfect and blessed, you must be perfected in this holiness, which must make you capable of the perfect fruition of the most holy God, and capable of his perfect love and praise. There is no Heaven without a perfection in holiness. If therefore you let fall your desires of this, it seems you let fall your desires of Salvation. Up then and be doing! and grow as men that are growing up to glory; and if you believe that you are in your progress to Heaven, being nearer your Salvation than when you first believed, see then that you make a progress in heavenly mindedness, and that you be ripe for Salva-

Salvation than when you first believed. How ill doth it become men to make any stand in the way to Heaven? especially when they have been in the way so long, that we might have expected before this they should have been as it were almost within sight of it?

20. Consider also that, *Little Grace, Little Glory; and the greater measure of Holiness, the greater measure will you have of Happiness.* I know that the glory of the lowest Saint in Heaven will be exceeding great: but doubtless the greatest measure is unspeakably most desirable. And as it will not stand with the truth of Grace for a man to be satisfied with a low degree of Grace, though he plead the happiness of the lowest Christian, and his own unworthiness of the least degree: So at least it ill befits an Heir of glory to *desire* but the lowest degree of glory; though he plead the happiness of the lowest Saint in Heaven, and his own unworthiness of the lowest place. For he that will be so content with the *smallest Glory*, as not to have hearty *desires* of more, is accordingly content to have in himself the smallest measure of the *knowledg* and *Love of God*, and to be *Loved* in the smallest measure by him; and to have the *least enjoyment* of him; and to bear the smallest part in his praises, and in pleasing and glorifying him for ever: For all these things are our happiness it self. And how well this agreeth with a gracious frame of mind, I need not any further tell you.

But because some make question of it, whether the *degree of glory* will be answerable to the *degree of Holiness*, I shall prove it in a few words.

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1. It is the very drift of the Parable of the Talents in *Matth. 25*. He that had gotten most by improvement, was made Ruler proportionably over most Cities. Not he that had been at the greatest bodily labour in Religion, nor every one that had past the greatest sufferings; but he that had got most holiness to himself, and honour to God by the improvement of his Talents, and so had doubled them.

2. The degrees of *Holiness hereafter* will be divers, as are the degrees of *Holiness here*: for as men sow they will reap; and there is no promise in Scripture that men that dye with the smallest Holiness shall be made equal to them that dyed with the greatest *Holiness*. And that the greatest *Holiness* hereafter must have the greatest *Happiness*, is past denial. For 1. *Holiness* in Heaven is an essential part of the felicity it self. It is the perfection of the Soul. 2. The use of it is for perfect fruition, and perfect exercise of love and praise; which are the other parts of glory. And God will not give men powers, capacities and dispositions in Heaven which shall be in vain: as he giveth hungering and thirsting, and Love, so will he give proportionable satisfaction, and not tantalize his Servants in their blessedness, and leave a part of Hell in Heaven. 3. And *Holiness* is pleasing to God in its own nature: and therefore the greatest holiness will greatlyest please him: and he that most pleaseth God, hath the greatest Glory. These things are plain.

3. Moreover, we have great reason to conceive of the state of the glorified, in some congruency with the rest of the workmanship of God.

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God. But in all the rest there is a difference or imparity: therefore we have reason to think it is so here. On Earth there are *Princes* and *Subjects* in the *Commonwealth*: and *Pastors* and *People* in the *Churches*; and several degrees among the people as to gifts and comforts: Among the Devils there are degrees: and among Angels themselves there are *Principalities* and *Powers* and *Thrones* and *Dominions*. And why then should we imagine that the *Heavenly Hierusalem* shall not be so too?

4. And Christ plainly intimateth that there is a place *on his right hand* and *his left* to give, in that Kingdom, though as the Son of Man he had not the principal disposal of it (And then the Kingdom must be delivered to the Father, and God be all and in all; and therefore the Mediator as such have somewhat less to do, than now.) And when Christ telleth us of *Lazarus* in *Abrahams bosome*, and of *many from the East and West* sitting down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, he intimateth to us, that every place in Heaven is not so high as *Abrahams bosome*, nor a sitting with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. So that I take it as a plain revealed truth that *divers degrees of holiness will have divers degrees of Glory hereafter*.

The chief Argument to the contrary is fetcht from the Parable of the *Labourers*, that coming in at *several hours*, received every one a penny. But this is much misunderstood: For here is not a word in it contrary to our Assertion. The Parable only saith that [*Glory shall not be proportioned to the Time; but they that come later shall have never the less for that*]. Which is nothing to our

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question about the *Degrees of Holiness*. For many that are *first in Time* may be *least and last in Holiness*; and many that are *last in Time*, may in that little time come to be *best and greatest in Holiness*: and consequently in *Glory*. The Parable in *Matth. 25*. shews that God will give different degrees of glory according to the difference in improvement of our *Talents*: And the other Parable shews that he will not give out his *Glory* according to mens *Time* and standing in the Church seeing a weaker Christian may be of longer standing, and a stronger of a later coming in: And what shew of discord is there between these? 2. And yet it's doubtful in the Judgment of good Expositors, whether the Parable of the penny do speak of *Heaven* at all or not: or whether it speak not only of the *Vocation* of the *Gentiles*, and taking them into the Gospel Church in equality with the Believing Jews: though the Jews being Gods ancient people, had been longer in the Vineyard, and the Gentiles were called but as at the eleventh hour, yet God will make the Gentiles equal in the Grace of *Vocation*, because in this he hath not engaged himself, but may do with his own as he list: Which ever of these two is the thing intended in the Text, or possibly both, it is certain that this general is the sum of the Parable [*That the first may be last, and the last first*]: that is, *That God will not give men the greatest reward that were first called*: but he never said that he would not reward them most, that had done him the truest service and were highest in *Holiness*.

Object. But the reason is, [*May I not do as I will with my own*]. True: but you must remember

ber *what it is a reason of*; even of the Cause in question, and may not by you be extended to *other causes* without a warrant: You never read that he equally pardoneth the Believer and the unbeliever, or saveth the Regenerate and unregenerate, and then gives this reason of it, [*May I not do as I will with my own*]. For this can be no reason for any thing which he hath revealed that he *will not do*: Prove first that he *will do it*, and then bring your *reasons why*; but not before. So that it extendeth not to the case of *different Glory upon different degrees of holiness*; for this he hath revealed that he *will do*.

So much (and perhaps too much) to satisfy the doubtful: Now I desire to return to the dull and languishing Christian, and beseech them to remember what a difference there will be between one Saint and another in Glory! And O who would not aspire after the highest measure of Holiness, in hope of a high degree of Glory? Christian, hadst thou not infinitely rather Love God with the *greatest Love* than with a *less*? and be *beloved* again with the *greatest* of *his Love*? I mean, by partaking of the *greatest effects* of it, and the *fullest sense* of his everlasting favour? Remember this, and sure it will persuade thee to gird up thy loyns, and run as for the incorruptible Crown, and press on to the mark for the price of the high Calling, and not to sit down with weak beginnings: especially when the way is so sweet as well as the end: and the *greatest Holiness* hath *here also* the *greatest spiritual reward*; and is attended with the *greatest peace and joy* (in the ordinary course of Gods dispensations). And when all the knocks and falls

and cries of Christians in this life, proceed from the childish weakness of their spirits: And almost all the wots and calamities that attend us, our *shames*, our pains, our contentions, and divisions, and the lamentable difficulty, (that seems an impossibility) of healing them, or preventing more, All is from the corruptions that are the companions of our weakness: And could we but grow up to a Manhood of understanding, humility, meekness, self-denial, and the Love of God in Christ, and of one another, we might then have some hope of the Cure of all. Alas that men that are so sensible of the difference between a weak body and a strong, a sick and a sound, a child and a man, an Ideot and a man of wisdom, though all of them have humane nature; should yet be so little sensible of the great difference between a weak Christian and a strong, a sick and a sound, (comparatively sound) a childish, and a manly wise *confirmed* Christian! Did you well know the difference, you would shew us that you make a greater matter of it.

And now Christian Reader, I intreat thee soberly to consider of these twenty Motives, Whether they do not shew thee reason enough to move thee to look after higher things, and not to stay in an infancy of holiness. It is a blessed mercy I confess that God hath given thee a *true Conversion*, and the *smallest measure* of the heavenly life: I do not move thee to undervalue it: Nay I am blaming thee for *undervaluing* it: For if thou didst not *undervalue* it, thou wouldst earnestly desire *more*. Thou hast cause to bless
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God to all eternity, and to all eternity thou shalt bless him, for making thee a *New Creature*, even a living Member of his Son: And I know that thy condition is unspeakably better than the greatest Prince's or Emperour's upon earth, that is void of Holiness. I know that thou hast still ground of exceeding consolation: I am not taking thy comforts from thee: I know God despiseth not the day of small things: and that Christ will not *quench the smoking Flax*, nor *break the bruised Reed*, nor cast off the poorest Infants of his Family, or lose any one of the Lambs of his Flock. But yet for all this I must tell thee, that there is a great deal of difference in excellency, and strength, and comfort, and happiness, between one sanctified person and another: And if thou be so apt to be *over-covetous* of worldly riches where God forbiddeth it, and limiteth thy desires, and where there is no such necessity or excellency to entice thee; why shouldst thou not cherish that *holy Covetousness* which God expressly commandeth thee? *1 Cor. 12. 31. [Covet earnestly the best gifts]*. And which he hath promised a blessing to [*Matth. 5. 6. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after Righteousness, for they shall be filled*]. This is not spoken of them that have no righteousness, but of them that have it, and fain would have more: For 1. There is no such Promise made to any that are short of saving Faith. It is not any common Grace that God makes this Promise to, but a special Grace. And 2. It is evident that no man can thus hunger and thirst after righteousness without righteousness: for even this hungering and thirsting is a degree of true Sanctification. You would not take up

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with a Cottage or smoaky Cabbin if you could have a Pallace; nor with dry Bread if you could lawfully have plenty; nor with a torn or thredbare Coat, if you can have better; nor with a poor laborious toilsome life, in disgrace and the reproach of men, if you could have honour and ease and abundance. And yet will you take up with so poor a stock of holiness! and so dark a mind, and small a measure of heavenly light! and so cold a love to God and glory! and so barren and common a kind of life? God hath commanded you, *that having food and raiment, you shou'd therewith be content*: but he never commanded you that being once Converted and made an Infant in Grace, you should therewith be content: So *content* you must be as not to *murmur*; but not so *content* as not to *Desire* more.

You can see the difference I doubt not in *others*, between a little Grace and more: O that you would but see this for your selves! If you have a froward *Wife*, or *Husband*, or *Child*, that hath a harsh, and passionate nature, and hath so much Grace only as to *lament* this when they are calmed, and to strive against it, but not to forbear the often exercise of it; though such a nature may be pardoned to the penitent, yet it may prove such a thorn in your own side, and such a smoak or continual dropping in your house, as will make you a weary of it. I have oft known men that had Wives of so much folly and passion and unruliness of tongue, that yet they hop'd had some saving Grace, that made them even a weary of their lives, and wish that they had met with a gentle nature. And methinks you should know that

that corruption in *your selves* is much more dangerous and hurtful to you than any that can be in Wife or Husband; and should be much more offensive and wearisome and grievous to you. Its a desperate sign of a bad heart, that can bear with corruption *in themselves*, and cannot bear with it in *Wife or Husband*, or those that do them wrong by their corruptions. If weakness of Grace do leave your nearest friends thus lyable to wrong and abuse you, and this trouble you; consider that your *own weakness* leaves you lyable to far greater and often offences against God; and this should trouble you much more.

Let me give you another instance: If you have a Pastor that is truly godly, and yet is so weak that he can scarce speak with any understanding or life, the Message that he should deliver, and withall is undiscerning, and as scandalous as will stand with Grace; what good is this man like to do for all his Godliness! At least you will soon see a lamentable difference between such a one and a judicious, convincing, holy, heavenly, powerful, and unsported man! O what a blessing is one to the place! and the other may be a grievous judgment; and you would be ready to run away from his Ministry. Why Sirs, if there be so great a difference between *Pastor* and *Pastor*, where both have Grace; methinks you should see what a difference there is also between *People and People*, even where all have Grace. For truly poor Ministers find this to their sorrow in their people, as well as you can find it in them. Some Ministers have a stayed, confirmed, judicious, humble, meek, self-denying, teachable, peaceable, and experienced people:

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people : and these walk comfortably, and guide them peaceably, and labour with them cheerfully ; and O what beauty and glory is upon such Assemblies ! and what order, and growth and comfort is among them ? But alas, how many Ministers have a flock (even of those that we hope are godly) that grieve them by their levity, or weary them by their unteachable ignorance or self-conceitedness, or hinder their labours by errors and quarrels, and perverse opposition to the truths which they do not understand ? So that there is a great difference between people and people that are godly.

Brethren, it is far from the desire of my heart, to cast any unjust dishonour upon Saints ; much less to dishonour the Graces of God in them ! No ; I take it rather for an honour to that immortal spark, that it can live among its enemies and not be conquered, and in the waters of corruption, and not be quenched. But yet I must take up a just complaint, that few of us answer the cost of our Redemption and the provisions of God ; or are near such a people as our receiveings or Professions require we should be. It is one of the most grievous thoughts that ever came to my heart, to observe how the lives of the greatest part of Professors do tend to dishonour the power and worth of Grace in the eyes of the World ! and that the ungodly should see that Grace doth make no greater a difference, and do no more upon us than it doth ! Yea it is a *fore temptation* oftentimes to Believers, to see that Grace doth no more in the most ; but that so many are still a shame to their Profession.

I must confess that I once thought more highly

ly of Professors as to the *measure* of their Grace, than experience now will suffer me to think. Little did I think that they had been so unstable, so light, so ignorant, so giddy, as to follow almost any that do but whistle them. What a dreadful sight it is to see, how quickly the most odious Heresies do infect and destroy even multitudes of them, and that in a moment, as soon as they appear? the grossest mists of the bottomless pit are presently admired as the light of God.

If a Church-divider do but arise, how quickly doth he get Disciples!

If a Papist have but opportunity, he will lightly catch some as oft as he doth cast his net. If he cannot prevail bare-faced, it is but putting on the visor of some other Sect.

Even the odious Heresies of the Quakers themselves, and their *railings*, which an honest Pagan would abhor, do presently find entertainment with Professors; and let the matter or manner be never so senseless, yet is it accepted if it be but zealously put off. O who would have thought that our people that seemed godly should be so greedy of the Devils baits as to catch at any thing, yea and to devour the bare hooks! O who would have thought that so many that seemed lovers of God, would so readily believe every deceiver that speaks against him, if he can but do it with a pious pretence.

Yea if *Seekers* themselves do but cast in their objections, how many of our people are presently at a loss, and their Faith is muddled, and they are to *seek* for a Ministry, and to *seek* for a Church! and to *seek* for Ordinances, and to *seek* for

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for a Scripture, even for the Gospel it self; and therefore it's like they are to *seek* for a Christ, or to *seek* for a Religion, if not to *seek* for God, and for a *Heaven*.

O sad day! that ever these things should come to pass! and that we are forced to utter them, having no possibility of concealing them from the World! Were these men confirmed and stablished in the Faith? Were these men rooted and built up in Christ? Alas Sirs, if any deceivers come among us, how few of our people are able to withstand them, and defend the truth of God against them? but they are caught up by the Devils Faulconers, as the poor Chickens by the Kite, except those that fly under the wings of a judicious settled Minister.

If an Anabaptist assault their Baptism, how few of them can defend it! And, silly Souls, when they find themselves non-pluss'd, they suspect not their own unfurnished understandings, or unexperienced unsetled hearts, but suspect the truth of God, and suspect their Teachers, be they never so far beyond them in knowledg and holiness; as if their Teachers had misled them, when ever these unprofitable Infants are thus stalled.

If a Papist be to plead his cause with them, how few have we that can answer him?

If an Infidel should oppose the Scripture, or Christ himself, how few among us are able to defend them, and solidly give proof either of the truth of Scripture, or of the Faith that they do profess?

And this is not all (though it is a heart-breaking case), but even in their *Practice*, alas, what

remisness and what corruptions do appear! How few in secret do keep any constant watch upon their hearts! and fear and abhor the approach of an evil thought? Nay how few are they that do not leave their fancy almost common, and ordinarily even feed on covetous, proud, malicious, or lustful thoughts, and make no great matter of it, but live in it from day to day! How few do keep up life and constancy in secret Prayer or Meditation! How few are the Families where the Cause and Worship and Government of Christ is kept up in life and honour; and where all is not dissolved into a little weary, disordered, heartless performance?

Look into our Congregations, and judge but by their very looks, and carriage, and gestures, how many even of those that we think the best, do so much as *seem* to be earnest and serious in Prayer or Praise, when the Church is upon that work! Though it be the highest and noblest part of Worship, and should be done with all the heart and might, and with a participation of a kind of Angelical reverence, devotion, and spirituality; and if it were so, we should see it by some of the signs of reverence and affection: Yet alas, when we think the best of them should be striving with God, or rapt up in his Praises, they do but *Hear us Pray* as they *hear us Preach*, and think they have done fair to give us the *bearing*. They sit on their *Seats* in Prayer, or use some *crooked leaning gesture*, perhaps looking up and down about them, perhaps half asleep; but few of them with *eyes and hands and hearts* lift up to Heaven, do behave themselves as if they believed that they had so nearly to do with God.

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God. I know reverent gestures may easily be counterfeited : but that shews that they are good, when Hypocrites think them a fit cover for Hypocrisie ; for they use not to borrow credit from evil, but from *some good* to be a cover to the evil : And it leaveth the neglects of the godly more unexcusable, when they will not go so far herein as hypocrites themselves, nor by their behaviour in a publick Ordinance, so much as seem to be seriously imployed with God.

And if we try the *Graces*, or *obedience* of Professors, alas, how small shall we find them in the most ? How little are most acquainted with the life of Faith ? How little do they admire the Redeemer and his blessed work ? How unacquainted are they with the daily use and high improvement of a Saviour ; for access to God, and supportation, and corroboration of the Soul, and for conveyance of daily supplies of Grace, and help against our spiritual enemies ? How few are they that can rejoyce in tribulation, persecution and bodily distresses, because of the hopes laid up in Heaven ? and that can live upon a Promise, and comfortably wait on God for the accomplishment ? How few that live as men that are content with God alone, and can cheerfully leave their flesh, and credit, and worldly estate to his disposal, and be content to want or suffer when he sees it good for them ? What repinings and troubles possess our minds if the flesh be not provided for, and if God do but cross us in these worldly things ; as if we had made our bargain with him for the flesh, and for this World, and had not taken him alone for our portion ? How few can use prosperity in riches

riches and health and reputation, with a mortified, weaned, heavenly mind? Nay how few are there that do not live much to the pleasure of the Flesh, and pamper it as indulgently under the appearance of temperance and Religion, as others do in grosser wayes? Do but try the godly themselves by plain and faithful reproof of their corruptions, and see how many of them you will find, that will not *excuse* them and take part with the enemy, and be *offended* with you for your close reproof. If any of them be overtaken with a scandalous fault, and the Pastors of the Church shall call them to open Confession, and expression of Repentance, though you would little think a *penitent* man should once sicken at this, and refuse to do any thing that he can do, to repair the honour of God and his Profession, and to save the Souls of others whom he hath endangered, yet how many will you find that will add a wilful obstinacy to their scandal, and will deliberately refuse so great and clear and necessary a duty: So great is the interest of *Self* and *Flesh* in them, and consequently so little the interest of Christ, that they will live in impenitency in the eye of the Church, and venture on the high displeasure of God, come on it what will, and resist the advice of their best and wisest and most impartial friends, rather than they will so far deny themselves as to make such a free and faithful confession. They are many of them so much for holy discipline, that they are ready to fall out with Church and Ministers, and to be gone to a purer society, because it is not exercised. But *on whom?* On others only, and not upon them. When they need Discipline them-

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themselves how impatient are they of it; and how
do they abhor it? and what a stir do they make
before they will submit? even more sometimes
than a Drunkard or a Swearer, so small is their
Repentance and detestation of their sin? where-
by they shew that their zeal for *Discipline* and
Reformation, is much out of *pride*, that others may
be brought to stoop, or be cast out from them;
and not out of a sincere desire to have the refine-
ing and humbling benefit of it *themselves*.

And if any among them be either faulty or
reported so to be, who is forwarder than many
Professors of Godliness, to backbite them, and
speak of their faults when they cannot hear, nor
answer for themselves, nor receive any benefit
by it; and if another that hates backbiting do
but reprove them, they'll slander him also for a
defender of mens sin! But when they should go
in Christs way, and tell men of their faults, and
draw them to Repentance, and if they hear not,
take two or three, and speak to them again, how
hardly can you draw them to the performance of
this duty? What shifts and frivolous excuses
have they then? Nay, they will reproach the
Church or Minister for not casting such out, or
not keeping them from Communion, before
they have done, or will be perswaded to do these
duties that must go before.

Alas, how little hearty love is there to Christ
in his Members, even in them that are confident
they love the brethren? How few will do or
suffer much for them, or relieve them in their
want as suffering with them? How small a
matter, a word, a seeming wrong or disrespect
will turn their love into estrangedness or bitter-

ness?

ness? If they be tryed by an ill word, or a wrong, how touchy and froward and impatient do they appear: and it's well if they prove not downright malicious, or return not reviling for reviling.

Alas, how much pride prevaieth with many that seem to go far in the way of Piety? How wise are they in their own conceits? How able to judg of controversies, and how much wiser than their Teachers, before they can give a good account of the Catechism, or Fundamental truths? How well do they think of themselves and their own parts and performances? How ill do they bear dis-esteem or undervaluing? and needs they must be noted for some body in the world!

How worldly, and close handed and eager of gain, are many that say they despise the World, and take it for their enemy? If any duty be cross to their profit or credit with men, how obstinate are they against it? and such interest hath the flesh in them, that they will hardly believe that it is their duty.

How censorious are they of others, especially that differ from them in lesser things? and how unapt to judg themselves? O how few are the Christians that are eminent in humility, meekness and self-denyal, that are content to be accounted nothing, so that Christ may be *all*, and his honour may be secured! that live as men devoted to God, and honour him with their substance, and freely expend, yea study for advantages, to improve all their riches and interest to his service! How few are they that live as in heaven upon earth, with the World under their

fect, and their hearts above with God their happiness ! that feel themselves to live in the workings and warmth of love to God, and make him their delight, and are content with his approbation whoever disapproveth them ! that are still groaning or reaching and seeking after him, and long to be with him, to be rid of sin, and see his blessed face, and live in his perfect love and praises ? that love and long for the appearance of Jesus Christ, and can heartily say, Come Lord Jesus, come quickly. How few are they that stand in a day of tryal ? If they are tryed but with a foul word, if tryed but with any thing that toucheth their commodity ; if tryed but with the emptyest reasonings of deceivers, much more if they be tryed with the honours and greatness of the World, how few of them stand in tryal, and do not fall and forget themselves, as if they were not the men that they seemed to be before ! What then would they prove if they were tryed by the flames ?

Mistake me not in all this sad complaint : as I intend not the *dishonour of Godliness* by this, but of *ungodliness*, (for it is not because men are *godly* that they have these faults, but because they *are not godly more*). So here is no encouragement to the *unsanctified* to think themselves as good as the more Religious, because they are charged with so many faults : Nor do I affirm *all these things* to be consistent with true Grace that I have here expressed : But only this, that Professors that *seem godly* to others are thus too many of them guilty ; and those that *have true grace* may have any of these faults in a *mortified degree*, though not in a reigning predominant measure. But

But, methinks Sirs, you should by this time be convinced and sensible; how much we dishonour God by our infirmities ! and what a lamentable case it is, that the Church should consist of so many infants ; and so many should be so little serviceable to God or the common good, but rather be troublers of all about them. Alas that we should reach no higher, that yet no greater things should be attained. O what an honour would you be to your Profession, and what a blessing to the Church, if you did but answer the cost and pains of God and man, and answer the high things that you have been acquainted with and profess. That we could but boast of you as God did of *Job*, and could say to Satan or any of his instruments [Here be Christians rooted and stablished in the Faith ; try whether you can shake them or make them stagger, and do your worst.] “ Here is a man eminent in meekness and humility, and patience and self-denial ; “ discompose and disturb his mind if you can ? “ draw him to pride or immoderate passion, or “ censoriousness or uncharitableness if you can : “ Here are a people that are in unity, and knit “ together in Faith and Love ; of one heart, and “ one soul, and one lip : do your worst to divide them or break them into parties, or draw “ them into several minds and wayes, or exasperate them against each other. Here are a “ people established in Mortification, and that “ have Crucified the Flesh with its affections and lusts ! Do your worst to draw them to intemperance in eating or drinking or recreations, “ or any of the delights of the Flesh ? or to puff “ them up by greatness and prosperity, and make

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“them forget themselves or God. Try them
 “with Riches, or beauty, or vain-glory, or other
 “sensual delights, and see whether they will
 “turn aside, and be ever the less in communion
 “with God, and enticed to forget the joy that is
 “set before them, or will not rather despise your
 “baits, and run away from alluring objects as
 “their greatest dangers! Daunt them if you can
 “by threatnings! Try them by Persecution, by
 “Fire and Sword, and see whether they are not
 “past your shaking, even Rooted, Confirmed and
 “built up in Christ.]

O what a glory would you be to your Profession, if you could attain to this degree? Could we but truly thus boast of you, we might say our people are Christians of the right strain. But when we must come about you like men in a swoon, and can hardly perceive whether you are alive or dead, and can scarce discern whether you have any Grace or none. what a grief is this to our hearts; what a perplexity to us in our administrations, not knowing whether comfort or terror be your due: and what a languishing uncomfortable life is this to your selves in comparison of what you might attain to?

Rouze up your selves Christians, and look after higher and greater things; and think it not enough that you are barely alive. It is an *exceeding Righteousness* that you must have if you will be saved, even *exceeding* all that the un sanctified do attain: For [*Except your Righteousness exceed even the Righteousness of Scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, Matth. 5. 20.*] But it is yet a *more exceeding Righteousness*, that you must have if you will

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will be *Confirmed, built up, and abound,* and would honour your Profession, and cheerfully, successfully and constantly go on in the Journey, the race, the warfare that you have begun: You must then *exceed your selves,* and exceed all the feeble, unstable, wavering, infant-Christians that are about you. And to perswade you yet further to look after this, I shall here annex a few Motives more.

1. Consider Christian, That it is a God of exceeding infinite greatness, and goodness that thou hast to do with, and therefore it is not small and low matters that are suitable to his service. O if thou hadst but a glimpse of his Glory, thou wouldst say that it is not common things that are meet for such a dreadful Majesty: Hadst thou but a fuller taste of his Goodness, thy heart would say, This pittance of Love and Service is unworthy of him. You will not offer the basest things to a King, much less to the highest King of Kings. [If ye offer the blind for Sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now to thy Gouvernour: Will he be pleased with thee or accept thy person, saith the Lord of Hosts?] Mal. 1. 8. And verse 12, 13, 14. But ye have profaned it (his great name) in that ye say, The Table of the Lord is polluted, and the fruit thereof, his meat is contemptible: Ye have said also, What a weariness is it, and ye have snuffed at it saith the Lord of Hosts, and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame and the sick: thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand saith the Lord! But cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his

64 *Directions to the Converted, for their Flock a Male, and voweth and Sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King saith the Lord of Hosts, and my Name is dreadful among the Heathen.*] If you better knew the Majesty of God, you would know that the best is too little for him, and trifling is not tollerable in his service. When *Nadab* and *Abihu* ventured with false fire to his Altar, and he smote them dead, he silenced *Aaron* with this reason of his Judgment [*I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people will I be glorified,*] Lev. 10. 1, 2, 3. That is, I will have nothing common offered to me, but be served with my own holy peculiar service. When the *Bethshemites* were smitten dead, 50070 men of them, they found that God would not be dallyed with, and cried out [*Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?* 1 Sam. 6. 20.

2. Consider also, *It was an exceeding great price that was payed for your Redemption: For you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as Silver and Gold from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your Fathers, but by the precious blood of Jesus Christ,* 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. It was an exceeding great Love that was manifested by God the Father and by Christ in this work of Redemption; such as even poseth Angels and men to study it and comprehend it, 1 Pet. 1. 12. Eph. 3. 18, 19. And should all this be answered but with trifling from you? Should such a matchless Miracle of Love, be answered with no greater Love? especially when you were purposely redeemed from all iniquity, that you might be sanctified by Christ a peculiar people, zealous of good works, Tit. 2. 14. It being therefore so great a price that you

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you are bought with, remember that you are none of your own, but must glorify him that bought you, in body and spirit, 1 Cor. 6. 20.

3. Consider also, that it is not a small, but an exceeding glory that is promised you in the Gospel, and which you live in hope to possess for ever: And therefore it should be an exceeding Love that you should have to it, and an exceeding care that you should have of it. Make light of Heaven, and make light of all. Truly it is an unsuitable unreasonable thing, to have one low thought, or one careless word, or one cold Prayer or other performance, about such a matter as eternal glory. Shall such a thing as Heaven be coldly, or carelessly minded and sought after? Shall the endless fruition of God in glory, be look't at with sleepy heartless wishes. I tell you Sirs, if you will have such high hopes, you must have high and strong endeavours! A slow pace becomes not him that travelleth to such a home as this. If you are resolved for Heaven, behave your selves accordingly. A gracious, reverent, godly frame of spirit, producing an acceptable service of God, is fit for them that look to receive the Kingdom that cannot be moved, Heb. 12. 28. The believing thoughts of the end of all our labours, must needs convince us that we should be *stedfast and unmoveable, alwaies abounding in the work of the Lord*, 1 Cor. 15. 58. O hearken thou sleepy slothful Christian! Doth not God call, and Conscience call, *Awake, and up and be doing man; for it is for Heaven!* Hearken thou negligent, lazy Christian! Do not God and Conscience call out to thee, *O man, make hast and mend thy pace, it is for Heaven!* Hearken thou cowardly faint hearted

66 *Directions to the Converted, for their*
Christian; Do not God and Conscience call out to thee! *Arm man, and see thou stand thy ground; do not give back, nor look behind thee; but fall on, and fight in the strength of Christ; for it is for the Crown of endless glory*] O what a heart hath that man, that will not be heartned with such calls as these? Methinks the very name of God and Heaven should awaken you and make you stir, if there be any stirring power within you! Remissness in worldly matters hath an excuse, for they are but trifles: but slackness in the matters of Salvation, is made unexcusable by the greatness of those matters. O let the noble greatness of your Hopes appear in the Resolvedness, exactness and diligence of your lives.

4. Consider also, that it is not only low and smaller Mercies that you receive from God; but mercies innumerable, and inestimable and exceeding great. And therefore it is not cold affections, and dull endeavours, that you should return to God for all these mercies. Mercy brought you into the World; and Mercy hath nourished you and bred you up; and Mercy hath defended and maintained you, and plentifully provided for you. Your bodies live upon it: Your Souls were recovered by it: It gave you your being: It rescued you from misery: It saveth you from sin, and Satan, and your Selves: All that you have at the present, you hold by it: All that you can hope for, for the future must be from it. It is most sweet in quality: what sweeter to miserable souls than Mercy? It is exceeding great in quantity! [*The Mercy of the Lord is in the Heavens, and his faithfulness reacheth to the Clouds. His Righteousness is like the great Mountains; His*
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Judgments are a great deep.] Psal. 36. 5, 6. [O how great is his goodness which he hath laid up for them that fear him? which he hath for them that trust in him before the sons of men!] Psal. 31. 19. [His Mercy is great unto the Heavens, and his truth unto the Clouds,] Psal. 57. 10. And O what an insensible heart hath he that doth not understand the voice of all this wondrous mercy? Doubtless it speaketh the plainest language in the World: commanding great returns from us of Love, and praise, and obedience to the bountiful bestower of them. With David we must say, [Blessed be the Lord, for he hath shewed me marvellous kindness in a strong City; O Love the Lord all ye his Saints, for the Lord preserveth all the faithful], Psal. 31. 21, 23. [Teach me thy way O Lord; I will walk in thy truth: Unite my heart to fear thy Name. I will praise thee O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore, for great is thy mercy towards me; and thou hast delivered my Soul from the lowest Hell,] Psal. 86. 11, 12, 13. Unspeakable Mercies must needs be felt in deep impressions, and be so savoury with the Gracious soul, that methinks it should work us to the highest resolutions: Unthankfulness is a crime that Heathens did detest: And it is exceeding great unthankfulness, if we have not exceeding great love and obedience, under such exceeding great and many mercies as we possess.

5. Consider, that they are exceeding great helps and means, that you possess, to further your holiness and obedience to God: and therefore your holiness and obedience should also be exceeding great. You have all the Book of Nature to instruct you. Every Creature may teach you God, and calls
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68 Directions to the Converted, for their

loud upon you to perswade your hearts yet nearer to him. Every work of disposing Providence is an instructor and perswader of you. Every leaf and line of Scripture is a guide or spur to you. You have Ministers able and willing to help you: You have the help of the Communion of Saints: the help of the examples of the good; and the warnings of the Judgments of God upon the wicked: the helps of Sermons, the helps of Sacraments; the helps of Prayer and holy Meditation and Conference; Mercies to encourage you; Afflictions to excite you. What more would you have? And yet will you be Infants, and do no more with all your helps? But this I toucht upon before.

6. It is an exceeding great necessity that is upon you: And therefore your Resolutions should be exceeding high, and your diligence exceeding great. For all you are Converted, your Salvation lyeth yet upon your stability and perseverance, Col. 1. 22, 23. [Christ hath reconciled you in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in his sight; if ye continue in the Faith grounded and settled and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which you have heard.] God will not be an acceptor of persons! You must stick to his terms, if you will partake of his Salvation. He will not make two words with you. He hath told you what he expecteth of you; and that he will have. Death will not be bribed, nor put by. Judgment is comming on. There is no shifing out of the hands of God. And under such pressing necessities as these, what Christians should we be? How stable, and abundant in Faith and Righteousness.

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7. *It is a great account that you have to make, and therefore a great preparation that should be made.* When you shall be brought before the living God, and all your *times, and thoughts, and waies,* must be called over, and you see what follows, and are waiting for the final doom, then there will be no dull thoughts in your hearts; all will be then lively, and quite above this careless frame. Then even the wicked will have strong desires, [*O that we had taken another course! that we had but prevented this dreadful doom; whatever it had cost us!*] And should not believers now, be awakened to great and careful preparations; for such a day as this?

8. *For trifles here are great endeavours used.* To climb up into honour or riches in the World; to satisfy the flesh; to lay up a treasure on earth, and labour for the meat that perisheth. O what endeavours then should be used, for the heavenly everlasting treasure?

9. Consider also, *How forward and diligent should those men be, that are sure they can never go too high, nor be too diligent, when they have done their best?* Nay that are certain, that the best do come so abundantly short, that they must after sit down and lament that they were no better. O there is not the holiest Saint on earth, but will confess with lamentation, how little his love to God is in comparison of what it should be? how short all falls below our duty, below the glorious Majesty of God; below the precious love of Christ; below the worth of precious Souls; below the weight of endless glory; below the Mercies that should warm our hearts; below the great necessity that is on us; and consequently
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below their own desires. Look therefore after greater things, while you may attain them.

10. Lastly, Consider what abundance of great engagements are on you, that are sincere Believers, more than upon others.

1. You are nearly related to Christ than any others are. And therefore you should be more tender of offending him, and more eminent in love and service to him. You are his household-servants; and will you not labour for him and stick to him? You are his friends; and should a friend abuse him? should not a friend be faithful? You are his dear adopted children, and his Spouse: and should not you be faithful to him to the death? Should not all the love and service that you have be his? *Isa. 1. 2. 3. Mal. 1. 10. Gal. 5. 4.*

2. You have bound your selves to him by more serious frequent vows and Covenants than other men have done? How many persons and places and necessities of yours, can witness against you if you be not firm and forward for the Lord. As Joshua said to Israel, *Josh. 24. 27.* [Behold this Stone, it shall be a witness unto you, lest you deny your God.] So I may say, the places where you have kneeled, and prayed, and promised, will be witnesses against you, if you be not firm to God: the Churches that you have assembled in, the places you have walked in, in your solitary Meditations; the persons that have heard your promises and professions; the World about you that hath seen your forwardness, will all witness against you if you be not firm.

3. It is you that have the life and kernel of mercies; Others have but the crumbs that fall from your Tables: Others have common mercies, but you

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you have the great and special mercies that accompany Salvation: *All things are yours, and should not you be Christs?* 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22. Of you it is that God is so exceeding tender, that he chargeth your enemies not to touch you, and tells them that touch you, that they touch the Apple of his eye, *Zech. 2. 8.* And should not you abound in love and holiness? and should you not be as tender of his favour and his law, and honour, as of the Apple of your eye? Should not he that toucheth the Name, and Law, and Honour of God, by profaning them by sin, be as one that toucheth the Apple of your eye.

4. You have a spirit and heavenly Life within you, which the rest of the World are unacquainted with. And can you think it is not something extraordinary that God must needs expect from you? Will you not walk in the Spirit which is given you, and mortify the flesh by it? *Gal. 5. 16, 17, 24.* Is there not more expected from the living than the dead: Surely he that hath made you New Creatures, and made you partakers of the Divine nature, doth expect somewhat Divine in your affections and devotions, and that you be somewhat more than men.

5. Moreover, it is you above others, for whom the Word and Messengers of God are sent! We must speak to all? but it is you that Gods special eye is upon; it is your Salvation that he intends to accomplish by us, *Luke 4. 26, 27.* There were many Widows in the dayes of Elias, and many Lepers in the dayes of Elisha: but it was but to one of them that the Prophet was sent! We make the ungodly multitude even rage against us, and Ministers are hated, for magnifying the Grace of God

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to you, and declaring his special love to you above others? When Christ himself had spoken the fore-cited words, its said in the next Verses 28, 29. that [*All they in the Synagoge when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust him out of the City, and led him to the brow of the hill whereon their City was built, that they might cast him down headlong.*] This was the entertainment of Christ himself when he did but declare how few it is that God will save, and for whose sakes he specially sends his Messengers. And must we incur all this for magnifying you, and will you dishonour your selves? Is all our study and labour for you, and our lives for you, and all things for you; and will not you be wholly, and to the utmost of your strength for God? Are you cull'd out of all the World for Salvation, and will you not answer this admirable differencing Grace, by an admirable difference from those that must perish, and by an admirable excellency in meekness, humility, self-denial, and heavenliness, above other men?

6. Moreover, you know more, and have a greater experience to assist you than others have; and therefore you should excel them accordingly. Others have but heard of the odiousness of sin, but you have seen and felt it. Others have heard of Gods displeasure; but you have tasted it to the breaking or bruising of your hearts! You have been warned at the very quick, as if Christ had spoken to your very flesh and Bones, [*Go thy way, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.*] And as Ezra said, Chap. 9. 13. *After all that is come upon us, should we again break thy Commandements, wouldst thou not be angry with us till thou*

thou hadst consumed us ?] So, if after all your spiritual experiences, after so many tastes of the bitterness of sin, and groans, and prayers, and cries against it, you shall yet live as like to the wicked as you dare, and be familiar with that which hath cost you so dear ? how do you think that God must take this at your hands ? You have tasted of the sweetness of the Love of Christ, and wondered at the unspeakable Riches of his Grace ? You have tasted the sweetness of the hopes of Glory, and of the powers of the World to come. You have perceived the necessity and excellency of holiness, by inward experience ! And if after all this you will draggle on the earth, and live below your own experiences, contenting your selves with an Infancy of Love, and Life, and fruitfulness, how much do you then transgress against the Rules of Reason, and of Equity ?

7. Moreover, *All the World expecteth much more from you, than from any others.* God expecteth more from you ; for he hath given you more, and meaneth to do more for you ? Must you be in the eternal Joyes of Heaven, when all your unsanctified Neighbours are in torments, and yet will you not more endeavour to excel them ? Is it not unreasonable to expect to be set eternally at so vast a distance from the ungodly world, even as far as Heaven is from Hell, and yet to be content to differ here but a little from them in Holiness ? The Lord *knows* that poor forsaken impenitent sinners will do no better ; but rage and be confident till they are past remedy : He *looks* for no better from them than to neglect him, and slight his Son, and Word, and Wayes ; and

to go on in Worldliness and fleshly living; to be filthy still, and careless, and presumptuous and self-conceited still. But it's higher matters that he expects from you; and good reason, he hath done more for you, and prepared you for better things! The *Ministers* of Christ do look for little better from many of their poor ignorant ungodly Neighbours, but even to rub out their dayes in security and self-deceit, and to be barren after all their labours, if not to hate us for seeking to have saved them. But it's *you* that their eyes are most upon; and *you* that their hearts are most upon. Their comfort, and the fruit of their lives, lyes much in your hands: saith *Paul* 1 *Thess.* 3. 7, 8, 9. [*Brethren we were comforted over you, in all our affliction and distress, by your Faith: For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord! For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God: Night and day Praying exceedingly, that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your Faith*]. You see here, that your Pastors lives are in your hands: If *you stand fast*, they *live*. For the end of life is more then life; and your Salvation is the end of our lives. If the impenitent world reproach us, and abuse and persecute us; we suffer it joyfully, as long as our work goeth on with *you*. But when *you* are at a stand: When *you* are barren and scandalous, and passionate, and dishonour your Profession, and put us in fears lest we have bestowed all our labour on *you* in vain; this breaks our hearts above any worldly cross whatsoever. O when the people that we should rejoyce and glory in shall prove unruly, self-conceited,

conceited, peevish, proud, every one running his own way, falling into divisions, contentions, or scandals, this is the killing of the comforts of your Ministers: When the ungodly shall hit us in the teeth with your scandals or divisions, and say, [*These are the godly people that you boasted of, see now what is become of them,*] this is the smock to our eyes, and the gall and Vinegar that's given us by the Adversary: and though still we know that our reward is with the Lord, yet can we not choose but be wounded for your sakes, and for the sake of the Cause and Name of God.

Yea the World it self expecteth more from you than others. When men talk of great matters, and profess as every Christian doth, to look for the greatest matters of eternity, and to live for no lower things, than everlasting fellowship with God and Angels, no wonder then if the World do look for extraordinary matters from you. If you tell them of reaching Heaven, they will look to see you wing'd like Angels, and not to creep on earth like worms. If you say that you are more than men, they look you should shew it by *doing* more than men can do; even by denying your selves and forgiving injuries, and loving your enemies, and blessing those that curse you, and contemning this World, and having your conversation in Heaven. O Sirs, believe it, it is not small or common things that will satisfy the expectations of God or men, of Ministers, or of the World themselves, concerning you.

8. Yea moreover, God himself doth make his boast of you, and call out the World to observe your

76 *Directions to the Converted, for their excellency: he sets you up as the light of the world to be beheld by others. He calls you in his Word, [his peculiar treasure above all people, Exod. 19. 5. Deut. 14. 3. Psal. 135. 4. a peculiar People, purified, and zealous of good works, Tit. 2. 14. He called you [a chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of him that hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: ye are as lively stones, built up a spiritual house, an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. 2. 5, 9.] You are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, 1 Pet. 1. 23. and are made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light. God hath delivered you from the power of darkness, and translated you, into the Kingdom of his dear Son, in whom you have redemption through his blood, the remission of sins, Col. 1. 12, 13, 14.] The Spirit it self beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then Heirs; Heirs of God, and joynt Heirs with Christ, Rom. 8. 16, 17. [All things shall work together for your good: He that spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things] Vers. 28. 32. Nothing but the illuminated Soul can discern the riches of the glory of Gods inheritance in the Saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the work of his mighty power, Eph. 1. 18, 19. When we were dead in sins, he hath quickned us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding Riches of his Grace in his kindness towards*

us through Jesus Christ. He hath brought us nigh that were far off, so that by one spirit we have access to the Father by Christ; and are now no more strangers and forreigners, but fellow Citizens of the Saints, and of the household of God, Eph. 2. 5, 6, 7, 13, 17, 18, 19. [We are members of the body of Christ; we are come to Mount Zion, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Ierusalem, and an innumerable company of Angels, to the general Assembly and Church of the first born which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, Heb. 12. 22, 23, 24.]

Brethren, shall the Lord speak all this, and more than this, in the Scripture of your Glory, and will you not prove your selves glorious; and study to make good this precious word? Doth he say, *The righteous is more excellent than his Neighbour*, Prov. 12. 26. and will you not study to shew your selves more excellent indeed? Shall all these high things be spoken of you, and will you live so far below them all? What a hainous wrong is this to God? He sticks not in boasting of you, to call you *his jewells*, Mal. 3. 17. and tells the world he will make them one day discern the difference between the Righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not, verse 18. He tells the World that his coming in Judgment will be to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in them that believe, 2 Thess. 1. 10. It's openly Professed by the Apostle John [We know that we are of God, and the whole World lyeth in wickedness], 1 John 5. 19. He challengeth any to condemn you, or lay any thing to

your charge, professing that it is he that justifieth you; casting the Saints into admiration by his love, [*What shall we say to these things? if God be for us, who can be against us?* Rom. 8. 31. He challengeth Tribulation, Distress, Persecution, Famine, or Nakedness, Peril or Sword, to separate you if they can from the Love of God. He challengeth Death and Life, Angels, Principalities and Powers, things present, and things to come, height and depth or any other Creature, to separate you, if they are able from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, Rom. 8. 35, 37, 38, 39. Shall the Lord of Heaven thus make his boast of you to all the World, and will you not make good his boasting? Yea I must tell you, he will see that it be made good to a word! and if you be not careful of it your selves, and it be not made good in you, then you are not the people that God thus boasteth of. He tells the greatest Persecutors to their faces, that the meek, the humble, little ones of his Flock have their Angels beholding the face of God in Heaven, Matth. 18. 10. and that at the great and dreadful day of Judgment they shall be set at his right hand as his Sheep, with a [*Come ye blessed, inherit the Kingdom,*] when others are set at his left hand as Goats, with a [*Go ye cursed into everlasting Fire,*] Matth. 25. He tells the world, that he that receiveth a Converted man, that is become as a little Child, receiveth Christ himself: and that whoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in him, it were better for him that a Millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the Sea, Matth. 18. 3, 4, 5, 6. Mark 9. 42. Luke 17. 2.

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of you, and will you not now be very tender of his interest and your duty? Shall he thus difference you from all the rest of the world, and will you not study to *declare* the difference? The ungodly even gnash the teeth at Ministers, and Scriptures, and Christ himself, for making such a difference between them and you; and will you not let them see that it is not without cause? I intreat you, I require you, in the Name of God, see that you answer these high commendations, and shew us that God hath not boasted of you beyond your worth?

9. Consider this as the highest Motive of all? *God doth not only magnify you and boast of you; but also he hath made you the living Images of his blessed self, his Son Iesus Christ, his Spirit and his holy Word; and so he hath exposed himself, his Son, his Spirit, and his Word, to be censured by the World, according to your lives.*

The express Image of the Fathers person is the Son, Heb. 1. 3. The Son is declared to the World by the Holy Ghost: The Holy Ghost hath endited the Holy Scriptures, which therefore bear the Image of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This holy Word, both Law and Promise is written on your hearts, and put into your inner parts, by the same spirit, 2 Cor. 3. 3. Heb. 8. 13. and 10. 16. So that as God hath imprinted his holy nature in the Scripture, so hath he made this word the Seal, to imprint again his Image on your hearts. And you know that common eyes can better discern the Image in the Wax than on the Seal. Though I know that the hardness of the Wax, or something lying between, or the imperfect application, may cause an imperfection in the I-

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mage on the Wax, when yet the Image on the
Seal is perfect: And therefore the World hath
no just cause to censure God, or Christ, or the
Spirit, or the Word, to be imperfect because that
you are so: But yet they *will* do it, and their
temptation is great. O Sirs, how would your
Prince take it of you, or how would your poor-
est friend take it of you, if you should hang forth
a deformed picture of them to the view of all
that shall pass by: and should represent them as
blind, or leproous, or lame, wanting a leg or an
arm or an eye? Would they not say that you
unworthily exposed them to scorn? So if you
will take on you to be the living Images of God,
of Christ, of the Spirit, and the Word; and yet
will be blind, and worldly, and passionate, and
proud, and unruly, and obstinate, or lazy and
negligent, and little differing from those that
bear the Image of the Devil; what do you but
Proclaim that the Image of God, and of Satan
and the World do little differ! and that God is
thus unrighteous and unholy as you are.

10. Lastly Consider, *That the faithful servants*
of Christ are few; and therefore if those few disho-
nour him, and prove not fast to him; what do you
but provoke him to forsake all the World, and make
an end of all the Sons of men. It is but a little
flock to whom he will give the Kingdom, Luke 12.32
It is but a few from whom God expecteth any
great matter: And shall those few prove deceit-
ful to him? It must be you or none that must
honour the Gospel! You or *none* that must be
exemplary to the World; and shall it be *none at*
all? Shall *all the Workmanship* of God abuse
him? Shall he have no honour from any infe-
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riour Creature? How can you then expect that he should preserve the World? For will he be at so much care to keep up a World to dishonour and abuse him? If the *turning of mens hearts* prevent it not, he would come and *smite the earth with a Curse*, Mal. 4. 6. For the *Land that beareth Thorns and Bryars, is rejected, and is nigh unto Cursing, whose end is to be burned*, Heb. 6. 7, 8. If therefore *Israel play the Harlot, yet let not Judah sin*, Hos. 4. 15. If the Vessels of wrath prepared to destruction, will be blind and sensual and filthy still; yet let pollution be far from the sanctified. *Such were some of you, but ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified*, 1 Cor. 6. 11. O let the Lord be magnified in his Saints: Blot not out his Image: Receive not his impressions defectively and by the halves. Let the Name of the most holy one be written in your very foreheads. O that you would be so tender of the honour of the Lord, and shine forth so brightly in Holyness and Righteousness, that he that runs might read whose servants you are, and know the Image & Superscription of God, upon the face of your conversations! that as clearly as light is seen in and from the Sun, and the power and wisdom and goodness of God, is seen in the frame of the Creation, and of Scripture: so might the same shine forth in you; that you might *be Holy as God is Holy*, 1 Pet. 1. 16, and *perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect*, Matth. 5. 48. that they that would know God, may see him in his Saints, where his Image is, or should be so lively and discernable. And they that cannot read and understand the Scripture, or the works of Creation or disposing-Providence, may read and understand the ho-

ly and heavenly representations of your lives.

Men are apt to look after *Images* of the God-head, because they are carnal and far from God : O you that are appointed to bear his *Image*, see that you so represent him to the eyes of the world as may be to his glory and not to his dishonour, and take not the Name of God in vain.

It is so desirable for God, and for the Church, and for your own peace and happiness, that Christians should grow up to a ripeness in Grace, and be rooted, built up, confirmed, and abound, according to my Text, that it hath drawn out from me all these words of exhortation thereunto : Though one would think, that to men of such holy Principles and experience it should be more than needs : But if all will but serve to awaken the weak to a diligent progress, I shall be glad, and have my end. The great matter that I intended, when I began this discourse, is yet behind ; and that is, the giving you such *Directions* as may tend to your Confirmation and perseverance : Which I shall now proceed to : But I intreat every Reader that hath any spark of Grace in his Soul, that he will resolve to put these *Directions* in practice, and turn them not off with a bare perusal, or approbation. Let me reap but thus much fruit of all my foregoing Exhortations, and I shall not think my labour lost.



XX. DIRECTIONS

FOR CONFIRMATION

In a state of Grace.

DIRECT. I.

Be sure that the Foundation be well laid, both in your Heads and Hearts; or else you can never attain to Confirmation, nor be savingly built up.

TO this end you must know what the Foundation is, and how it must be soundly laid. The Foundation hath two parts or respects, according to the faculties of the Soul where it must be laid. The first is the Truth of the Doctrine and Matter, and the second is the Goodness of it. As True, the Foundation is laid in our Understandings: as Good, it is laid in the Will. Concerning both these, we must therefore first consider of the matter of the Foundation, and then of the Manner how that must be received or laid. And the Foundation is that matter, or object of our Faith and Hope, and Love,

Love, which is *Essential* to a *Christian*; that is, to the *Christian saving Faith, hope and love*. This hath been alwayes contained in our *Baptism*, because *Baptizing* us is making us *visible Christians*, or the solemn entrance into the state of *Christianity*. As therefore we are *Baptized* into the name of the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, renouncing the *Flesh, the World, and the Devil*; so the doing of this *unfeignedly*, without *equivocation*, according to the *Scripture* sense of the words, is the *Essence of Christianity*, or the right *laying of the Foundation*. So that the *Foundation-Principal*, or *Fundamental Matter*, is *God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*: The *Secondary Foundation*, or *Fundamental Doctrine*, is those *Scripture Propositions* that express *our Faith* in *God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost*. When we name the *three persons* as the object of the *Christian Faith*, we express *names of Relation*, which contain both the *persons, nature, and Offices*, or undertaken works: Without either of which, *God* were not *God*, and *Christ* were not *Christ*, and the *Holy Ghost* were not in the sense of our *Articles of Faith, the Holy Ghost*. As we must therefore believe that *there is One only God*: So we must believe that *God the Father* is the *First* in the *holy Trinity of persons*: that the whole *Godhead* is perfect and infinite in *Being, and Power, and Wisdom, and Goodness*, (in which all his *Attributes* are comprehended; but yet a distinct understanding of them all is not of absolute necessity to *Salvation*.) That this *God* is the *Creator, Preserver, and Disposer* of all things, and the *Owner and Ruler* of Mankind, most just, and merciful: that as he is the *Beginning* of all, so he is the *Ultimate end*, and the *Chief Good* of man,

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man, which before all things else, must be loved and sought. This is to be believed concerning the *Godhead*, and the *Father* in person. Concerning the *Son*, we must moreover believe, that he is the same God with the Father, the second person in Trinity, incarnate and so become man, by a personal union of the Godhead and Manhood: That he was without Original or actual sin, having a sinless nature, and a sinless life; that he fulfilled all Righteousness, and was put to death as a Sacrifice for our sins, and gave himself a Ransome for us, and being buried, he rose again from the dead, and afterward ascended into Heaven, where he is Lord of all, and intercedeth for Believers; that he will come again and raise the dead, and judg the World, the Righteous to everlasting Life, and the Wicked to everlasting punishment: that this is the only Redeemer, *the Way, the Truth, and the Life*, neither is their access to the Father but by him, nor Salvation in any other. Concerning the *Holy Ghost*, we must believe that he is the same One God, the third person in Trinity, sent by the Father and the Son to inspire the Prophets and Apostles; and that the Doctrine inspired and miraculously attested by him is true: that he is the sanctifier of those that shall be saved, renewing them after the Image of God in Holiness and Righteousness, giving them true Repentance, Faith, Hope, Love, and sincere Obedience; causing them to overcome the Flesh, the World and the Devil; thus gathering a Holy Church on earth to Christ, who have by his Bloud the pardon of all their sins, and shall have everlasting blessedness with God.]

[This

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This is the *Essence of the Christian Faith* as to the *Matter of it*. As to the *Manner of Receiving* it by the *understanding*, 1. It must be received as *Certain truth of Gods Revelation*, upon the *credit of his Word*, by a lively effectual belief; piercing so deep, as is necessary for its prevalency with the *Will*. 2. And it must be *Entirely* received, and not only a part of it: Though all men have not so exactly formed distinct apprehensions of every member of this belief, as some have, yet all *true Christians* have a *true* apprehension of them. We feel by daily experience, that with the wisest, some matters are *truly* understood by us, which yet are not so *distinctly* and *clearly* understood, as to be ready for an *expression*. I have oft in matters that I am but studying, a light that gives me a *general imperfect* but *true* conception, which I cannot yet *express*; but when another hath helped me to form my conception, I can quickly and truly say, that *was* it that I had an unformed apprehension of before, and it that I meant, but could not utter; not so much for want of *words*, as for want of a full and distinct conception.

2. The *Matter of our Christianity* to be *Received* by the *Will*, is as followeth. As we must consent to all the forementioned truths by the Belief of the understanding, so the *pure Godhead* must be Received as the *Fountain* and our *End*: the *Father* as our *Owner, Ruler, and Benefactor*, on the title of *Creation and Redemption*; and as our everlasting happiness. The *Son* as our *only Saviour* by *Redemption*, bringing us pardon, reconciliation, holiness and glory, and delivering us from sin and Satan, and the wrath and Curse

Curse of God, and from Hell. The *Holy Ghost* as our *Guide* and *Sanctifier*. All which containeth our *Renouncing the Flesh, the World, and the Devil*, and carnal *Self* that is the point of their *Unity* and heart of the old Man. This is the *Good* that must be embraced, or accepted by the will.

And secondly as to the *Manner* of Receiving it, it must be done *Unfeignedly, Resolvedly, unservedly or absolutely, and habitually*, by an inward *Covenanting* of the heart, as I have formerly explained it. And this is the *Essence of Christianity*; This is true *Believing in God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*: This is the *Foundation*, and this is the right *laying* of it.

And now the thing that I am perswading you to is, to see that this *Foundation* be surely laid, in *Head and Heart*.

And 1. That it may be surely laid in the *Head*, you must labour, 1. To *understand* these *Articles*. And 2. to see the *Evidence* of their *verity*, that you may firmly *believe* them. And 3. To *Consider* of the *worth* and *necessity* of the *matter* revealed in them, that your *Judgments* may most *highly esteem* it. This is the sure *laying* the *Foundation* in the *Head*.

To these ends you should first learn some *Catechism*, and be well acquainted with the *Principles* of Religion: and also be much in reading or hearing the *holy Scripture*, and enquiring of your *Teachers*, and others that can help you; and see that you take your work before you, and step not higher till this be done. And then all other following *truths* and *Duties* and *promised benefits* must all be so learnt as to be built upon this
found-

foundation, and joyned to it, as receiving their life and strength from hence; and never look upon as separated from this; nor as more excellent and necessary.

For want of learning well, and believing soundly, these *Principles, Essentials, or Fundamentals* of Christianity, some of our people can go no further, but stand all their dayes in their ignorance, at a non-plus: Some of them go on in a blind Profession, deceiving themselves by building upon the Sand, and hold true Doctrine by a false unsound belief of it: And when the Clouds and storms do beat upon their building, it falls, and great is the fall thereof. With some of them it falls upon the first assault of any Seducer, that hath interest in them, or advantage on them: and abundance swallow up *Errors*, because they never well understood, or Firmly believ'd *Fundamental Truths*. With others of them, the building falls not until death, because they lived not under any shaking temptations. But it being but a perseverance in an unsound Profession, will nevertheless be ineffectual to their Salvation.

2. When you have thus laid the Foundation in your *understanding*, be sure above all that it be firmly laid in your *Heart or Will*. Take heed lest you should prove false and unstedfast in the holy *Covenant*: and lest you should take in the Word but into the *surface* of the Soul, and not give it depth of earth and rooting; and lest you should come to Christ but as a servant upon *tryall*, and make an *absolute resignation* of yourselves to him: Of which I warned you in the former Directions.

O this is it that makes our people fall so fast in a day of tryal: some shrink in adversity; and some are enticed away by prosperity: Greatness and honour deceiveth one; and riches run away with another; and fleshly pleasure poison a third, and his Conscience, Religion, Salvation and all he Sacrificeth to his belly, and swalloweth it down his throat; and all the Love, and goodness of God, the Bloud of Christ, the workings of the Spirit, the Precepts and Promises and Threatnings of the Word, and the joy and torments which once they seemed to believe, all are forgotten, or have lost their force: And all because the Foundation was not laid well at the first. But because this was the very business of the former Directions, I will dismiss it now.

DIRECT. II.

Think not that all is done when once you are Converted; but remember that the work of your Christianity then comes in, and must be as long as the time of your lives.

OF this also I shall say but little, because it is the drift of all the moving Considerations before-going. I doubt it is the undoing of many to imagine, that if once they are sanctified, they are so sure in the hands of Christ, that they have no more care to take, nor no more danger to be afraid of, and at last think that they have no more to do, as of necessity to Salvation: and
thus

thus prove that indeed they were never sanctified. I confess when a man is truly Converted, the *principal part* of his danger is over: he is safe in the love and care of Christ, and none can take him out of his hands. But this is but part of the truth: the other part must be taken with it, or we deceive our selves. There is still a great deal of work before us; and Holiness is still the way to happiness; and much care and diligence is required at our hands: And it is no more certain that we shall be *saved by Christ*, than it is that we shall be *kept in Faith, and love, and holy obedience* by him. It is as true that none can separate us from the *Love of God*, and from a care to please him, and from a holy diligence in the work of our Salvation, as that none can take us out of his hands, and bring us into a state of condemnation. He that is resolved to bring us to *Glory*, is as much resolved to bring us to it by perseverance in Holiness and diligent obedience; for he never decreeth one without the other; and he will never save us by any other way.

Indeed when we are Converted we have escaped many and grievous dangers; but yet there are many more before us, which we must by care and diligence escape. We are translated from *death to life*, but not from *earth to heaven*. We have the life of *Grace*, but yet we are short of the life of *Glory*. And why have we the life of *Grace* but to *use it*, and to *live by it*? Why came we into the *Vineyard*, but to *work*? And why came we into the *Army* of Christ but to *fight*? Why came we into the *race* but to *run* for the prize? or why turned we into the *right way*, but to *travel* in it? We never did God faithful service, till

till the day of our Conversion, and then it is that we *begin*: And shall we be so sottish as to think we have *done*, when we have but *begun*? Now you *begin to live*, that before were *dead*: Now you *begin to awake* that were before *asleep*: And therefore now you should *begin to work* that before *did nothing*, or rather a thousand fold worse than nothing. *Work* is the effect of *life*; it is the *dead* that lye still in darkness, and do nothing: If you had rather be *alive* than *dead*, you should rather delight in *action* than in *idleness*. It's now that you set to *Sea*, and *begin* your voyage for the blessed Land; many a storm, and wave, and tempest must you yet expect. Many a combat with temptations must you undergo: many a hearty prayer have you yet to pour forth. Many and many a duty to perform, to God and man. Think not to have done your *care* and *work*, till you have done your *lives*. Whether you come in at the first hour or at the last, you must work till night if you will receive your wages. And think not this a grievous doctrine. It is your *priviledge*, it is your *joy*, your *earthly happiness*, that you may be so employed; that you that till now have lived like swine, or moles, or earthly vermine, may now take wing and fly to God, and walk in heaven, and talk with Saints, and be guarded by Angels; is this a life to be accounted grievous! Now you begin to come to your selves; to understand what you have to do in the world; to live *like men*, that you may live *like Angels*! And therefore now you should begin accordingly to bestir you. I would not have you retain the same measure of *fears of Gods displeasure*, nor the

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same apprehensions of your misery, nor the doubts and perplexities of mind, which you were under at your first conversion; for these were occasioned by the passage in your change, and the weakness of your grace in that beginning, and your former folly made them necessary for a time: But I would have you retain your *fear of sinning*, and be much *more* in the *love of God*, and in his *service*, than you were at first. Temptations will haunt you to the last hour of your lives: If therefore you would not fall by these temptations, you must watch and pray to the last. Give not over watching till Satan give over tempting, and watching advantages against you. The promise is still but on condition, that you persevere and abide in Christ, and continue rooted and stedfast in the faith, and overcome and be faithful to the death, as you may see in *Joh. 15. throughout. Joh. 8. 31. Rev. 2. & 3. Col. 1. 22, 23. Work out* therefore your *salvation with fear and trembling. Phil. 2. 12.* If you have *begun* resolvedly, *proceed* resolvedly. It's the undoing of mens souls to think that all the danger is over, and lose their apprehensions of it, when they are yet but in the way: when their care and holy fears abate, their watch goes down: the soul's laid open as a common wilderness, and made a prey to every lust. *And therefore still know, your work's not done, till your life be done.*

DIRECT. III.

Be sure that you understand wherein your establishment and growth consisteth, that you may not miscarry by seeking somewhat else instead of it: nor think you have it when you have it not, or that you want it, when you have it, and so be needlessly disquieted about it.

For your assistance in this, I shall further shew you wherein your confirmation and growth consisteth in its several parts, both as it is subjected or exercised in your *understandings*, your *wills* and *affections*, and your *conversations*.

I. As holiness is in the *understanding*, it is commonly in Scripture called, *light* and *knowledg*, as comprehending the several parts. And the confirmation and growth of this must consist in these seven following parts.

1. It is ordinary with new Converted Christians, to see the great essential truths of the Christian profession, with a great *imperfection* as to the *evidences* that discover them. Either they see but *some* of the solid evidence, overlooking much more than they see; or more usually they receive the truth it self upon some *low insufficient evidence* at first, and then proceed to a kind of mixture, taking it upon *some evidences* that are *valid* and sufficient, and joyning some that are *invalid*, with them. But you must grow beyond this infancy of understanding: when you see greater and sounder evi-

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dences for the truth than you did before; and
when you see more of these solid evidences, and
leave not out so many as you did; and when
you lay smaller stress upon the smaller eviden-
ces, and none upon those that are invalid
and indeed no evidences, then are your under-
standings more confirmed in the truth, and this
is a principal part of their growth. So we find
the Samaritans of Sychar, Joh. 4. 39, 40, 41, 42.
[Many of them believed on him for the saying of the
woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I
did. (This was the first faith upon a weaker evi-
dence) [And many more believed, because of his
own words, and said unto the woman, Now we be-
lieve, not because of thy saying, for we have heard
him our selves, and know that this is indeed the
Christ, the Saviour of the world. Here is a nota-
ble confirmation and growth, by believing and
knowing the same thing which they believed be-
fore; it was before believed on weaker evidence,
and now upon stronger. Thus Nathaniel by Phi-
lips perswasion was drawn to Christ; but when
he perceived his omniscience that he knew the
heart, and things that were distant and out of
the reach of common knowledge, he is con-
firmed, and saith, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God,
thou art the King of Israel] And yet Christ tel-
leth him, that there were far greater evidences
yet to be revealed, which might beget a more
confirmed, stronger faith [Because I said unto
thee, I saw thee under the figtree, believest thou?
Thou shalt see greater things than these: verily, ve-
rily I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open,
and the Angels of God ascending and descending up-
on the Son of man, Joh. 1. 43, 49, 50, 51. There
is

is not one Christian of many thousand, that at first hath a *full sight* of the *solid evidences* of the Christian doctrine; but must grow more and more in discerning those *Reasons* for the truth which he believeth, which in the beginning he did not well discern. It is not the most *confident belief* that is alwayes the *strongest confirmed* belief; but there must be *sound grounds* and *evidence* to support that confidence, or else the *confidence* may soon be shaken; and is *not sound* even while it seems *unshaken*.

And here young beginners must be forewarned of a most dangerous snare of the deceiver; because at first the truth it self is commonly received upon *feeble* and *defective grounds* or *evidence*. It is the custom of the Devil and his deceiving instruments, to shew the young Christian the *weakness* of those grounds, and thence to conclude that *his cause* is *naught*: For it's too easie to perswade such that the *cause* hath no better *grounds* than they *have seen*. For having *not seen* any better, they can have no particular knowledge of them. And they are too apt to think over highly of their knowledge; as if there *were* no more reasons for the truth than *they* themselves have reacht to, and other men did see no more than they. And thus poor souls forsake the truth, which they should be built up and confirmed in; and take that for a reason against the truth, which is but a proof of their own infirmity. I meet with very few that turn to any Heresie, or Sect, but this is the cause: They were at first of the *right mind*, but not upon *sound* and *well-laid grounds*; but held the *truth* upon *insufficient reasons*: And then comes some deceiver, and beats them out of their former *grounds*, and

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so having no better, they let go the truth, and conclude that they were all this while mistaken. Just as if in my infancy I should know my own father only by his cloaths; and when I grow a little bigger, one should tel me that I was deceived, this is not my father, and to convince me should put his cloaths upon another, or tell me that another may have such cloaths, and hereupon I should be so foolish as to yield that I was mistaken; and that this man is not my father. As if the *thing* were false, because my *reasons* were insufficient. Or as if you should ask the right way in your travel, and one should tell you, that by such and such marks you may know your way: and you think you have found those marks a mile or two short of the place where they are: but when you understand that those are not the marks that you were told of, you turn back again before you come at them, and conclude that you have mist the way. So is it with these poor deluded souls, that think all discoveries of their *own imperfections*, and every confutation of their *own silly arguments*, to be a confutation of the *truths of God*, which they did hold: when alas, a strong well-grounded Christian, would make nothing of defending the cause which *they* give up, against more strong and subtile enemies; or at least, would hold it fast themselves. Well! this is the first part of your growth in knowledge, when you can see *more or better evidences*, for the great truths of Christianity, than you saw before.

2. Moreover, you must grow to a clearer apprehension of the very same reasons and evidences of the truth, which you saw before. For when a weak Christian hath the best arguments and grounds

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grounds in the world, yet he hath so dim a light of them, that makes them find the slighter entertainment in his affections. The best reason in the world can work but little on him that hath but a little understanding of it. There are various degrees of knowledge, not only of one and the same *truth*, because of the diversity of *evidence*, but of one and the same *evidence and reason* of that truth. I can well remember my self, that I have many a year had a common argument for some weighty truth, and I have made use of it, and thought it good, but yet had but little apprehension of the force of it: and many years after a sudden light hath given me (in my studies) so clear an apprehension of the force of that *same argument* which I knew so long, as that it hath exceedingly confirmed and satisfied me, more than ever I was before. I beseech you Christians consider of this weighty truth; it is not the *knowledge* of the *Truth*, that will serve your turns without a *true and solid knowledge* of that truth: nor is it the hearing or understanding of the *best grounds and reasons or proofs*, in the world, that will serve the turn, unless you have a *deep and solid apprehension* of those proofs and reasons. A man that hath the *best arguments* may forsake the truth, because he hath not a *good understanding* of those arguments: As a man that hath the *best weapons* in the world may be kill'd, for want of *strength & skill to use them*. I tell you, if you knew every truth in the Bible, you may grow much in knowledge of the very *same truths* which you know.

3. Moreover, a young ungrounded Christian, when he seeth *all the fundamental Truths*, and seeth good *evidence and*

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reasons of them, perhaps may be yet ignorant
of the right order and place of every truth: It's a
rare thing to have young Professors to under-
stand the necessary truths *methodically*: And this
is a very great defect. For a great part of the *use-
fulness* and *excellency* of particular truths consist-
eth in the respect they have to one another. This
therefore will be a considerable part of your
confirmation & growth in your understandings,
to see the *body* of Christian doctrine as it were at
one view, as the several parts of it are united in one
perfect frame; and to know what aspect one
point hath upon another; and which is their
due places. There is a great difference between
the sight of the several parts of a *clock* or *watch*,
as they are *disjoyned* and *scattered* about, and the
seeing of them *conjoyned* and in *use* and *motion*.
To see here a pin, and there a wheel, and not
know how to set them all together, nor ever see
them in their due places, will give but little sa-
tisfaction. It is the *frame* and *design* of holy Do-
ctrine that must be known, and *every part* should
be discerned as it hath its particu'ar use to that
design, and as it is connected with the other parts.
By this means only can the true nature of Theo-
logy, together with the harmony and perfection
of truth, be clearly understood. And every single
truth also, will be much better perceived, by
him that seeth its place and order, than by any
other. For one truth exceedingly illustrates and
leads in another into our understanding. Nay
more than so, your own hearts and lives will
not be well *ordered*, if the *method* or *order* of the
truths received should be mistaken. For the
words of God are the very *instruments* of your
sandi-

sanctification, which is nothing but their effects upon your *understandings* and *wills*, as they are set home by the holy Ghost. *Truths* are the *seal*, and your *souls* are the *wax*, and *holiness* is the *impression* made. If you receive but *some truths*, you will have but *some part* of the due *impression*: Nay indeed, they are so coherent, and make up the *sence* by their necessary conjunction, that you cannot receive *any one* of them *sincerely*, without receiving *every one* that is of the *essence* of the Christian belief. And if you receive them *disorderly*, the image of them on your souls will be as *disorderly*; as if your bodily members were monstrously misplaced. Study therefore to grow in the more *methodical knowledge* of the same truths which you have received. And though you are not yet ripe enough to discern the *whole body of Theology in due method*, yet see so much as you have attained to know, in the right order and placing of every part. As in Anatomy, its hard for the wisest Physician to discern the course of every branch of veins and arteries, but yet they may easily discern the place and order of the principal parts, and greater vessels: So it is in Divinity, where no man hath a perfect view of the whole, till he come to the state of perfection with God; but every true Christian hath the knowledge of all the *essentials*, and may know the *order and places* of them all.

4. Another part of your confirmation & growth in understanding, is, *In discerning the same truths more practically than you did before, and perceiving the usefulness of every truth, for the doing of its work on your hearts and lives.* It was never the will of God that bare *speculation* should be the end of his
Reve-

Revelations, or of our *belief*. Divinity is an *Affective practical Science*, therefore must *truths* be known and *believed*, that the good may be *received*, and a holy change may be made by them on the heart and life. Even the Doctrine of the *Trinity* it self is *practical*, and the fountain of that which is more easily discerned to be *practical*. There is not one Article of our faith, but hath a *special work* to do upon our hearts and lives; and therefore a *special fitness* for that work. Now the *understandings* of young Christians, do discern many truths, when they see but little of the *work* to be *done by them*, and the *special usefulness* of those truths to those works. This therefore must be your daily enquiry, and in this you must grow. As if you come into a workmans shop, and see a hundred tools about you, it is a small matter to discern the *shape* and *fashion* of them, and what mettle they are made of: But you will further ask, What is this tool to do, and what is that to do: If ever you will learn the trade, you must know the *use* of every tool. So must you, if you will be skilful Christians, be acquainted with the use of the truths which you have received; and know that *this truth is to do this work*, and that *truth to do that work, upon the soul and life*. A Husbandman may know as many *herbs*, and *flowers*, and *fruits* as a *Physician*, and be able to tell them all by name, and say this is such an herb, and that is such a one; and to perceive the shape and beauty of them. But he knows little or nothing that they are *good for*, unless to feed his cattle: Whereas the *Physician* can tell you, that *this herb* is good against *this disease*, and that herb against another disease, and
can

can make use of those same herbs to save mens lives, which other men tread under foot as useless. A Countrey man may see the names that are written on the Apothecaries boxes, but it is the Physician that knows the medicinal use of the drugs. So, many men that are unsanctified, may know the *outside* of holy doctrine, that little know *what use* is to be made of it: And the weak Christian knows less of this than the grown confirmed Christian doth. Learn therefore every day more and more, to know what every truth is good for, that this is for the exercise and strengthening of such a grace, and this is good against such or such a disease of the soul. Every leaf in the Bible hath a healing vertue in it: They are the leaves of the Tree of Life. Every sentence is good for something. [*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17.*] Not a word is without its usefulness.

5. Moreover, you must grow, not only in knowing the *usefulness* of truths, but also in knowing *how to use them*, that you may have the benefit of that worth that is in them. Many a man knows what *use* a workmans tools are for, that yet knows not *how himself to use them*. And many a one knows the use and vertue of herbs and drugs, that knows not how to make a medicine of them, and compound and apply them. There is much skill to be used in knowing the *seasons* of application, and the *measure*, and what is fit for one, and what for another, that we may make that necessary variation, which diversity of conditions do require

quire. As it is a work of skill in the *Pastors* of the Church, to *divide the word of God aright*, and *speak a word in season to the weary*, and *give the children their meat in due season*, 2 Tim. 2. 15. Isa. 50. 4. Mat. 24. 45. So is it also a work of skill, to do this *for your selves*, to know what Scripture it is that doth concern you; and when and in what measure to apply it, and in what order and with what advantages or correctives to use it, as may be most for your own good. You may grow in this skill as long as you live; even in understanding *how to use the same truths* which you have long known. O what excellent Christians should we be, if we had but this holy skill and hearts to use it. We have the whole *armour of God* to put on and use; but all the matter is *how to use it*. The same *sword of the spirit* in the hand of a strong and skilful Christian, may do very much, which in the hand of a young unskilful Christian, will do very little and next to nothing. A *young raw Physician* may know the *same medicines* as an able experienced Physician doth; but the great difference lieth in the skill to *use them*. This is it that must make you rich in grace, when you increase in the skilful use of truths.

6. Moreover, your understandings may be much advanced, by *knowing the same truths more experimentally than you did before*: I mean such truths as are capable of *experimental knowledge*. Experience giveth us a far more satisfactory manner of knowledge, than others have that have no such experience. To know by *hearsay*, is like the knowing of a Countrey in a *Map*; and to know by *experience*, is like the knowing of the same Countrey by *sight*. An experienced Nav-
gator,

gator, or Soldier, or Physician, or Governour, hath another manner of knowledge than the most learned can have without experience; even a knowledge that *confirmeth* a man, and makes him *confident*. Thus may you daily increase in knowledge, about the same points that you knew long ago. When you have *tasted and seen that the Lord is gracious*, (Psal. 34. 8. 1 Pet. 2. 3.) you will know him more experimentally than you did before; when you have tasted the sweetness of the promise, and of pardon of sin, and peace with God, and the hopes of glory, you will have a more experimental knowledge of the riches of grace, than you had before: And when you have lived a while in communion with Christ and the Saints, and walked a while with God in a heavenly conversation, and maintained your integrity, and kept your selves unspotted of the world, you will then know the nature and worth of holiness by a knowledge more *experimental* and *satisfactory* than before. And this is confirmation and growth in knowledge.

7. Moreover, you must labor to grow in a *higher estimation* of the same truths which you knew before. And this will be a consequent of the fore-mentioned acts. A child that findeth a jewel may set by it, for the shining beauty; when yet he may value it many thousand pounds below its worth. You see so much wisdom and goodness in God, the first hour of your new life, as causeth you to prefer him before the world? and you see so much necessity of a *Saviour*, so much love and mercy in Jesus Christ, as draweth up your hearts to him; and you see so much *certainly* and *glorious excellency* of the life to come, that makes you
value

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value it even more than your lives. But yet there is in all these such an unsearchable treasure, that you can never value them neer their worth; for all that thou hast seen of God, and Christ, and Glory, there is a thousand times more excellency in them yet to be discerned. For all the beauty thou hast seen in holiness, it is a thousand fold more beautiful than ever thou didst apprehend it: for all the evil thou hast seen in sin, it is a thousand fold worse than ever thou didst perceive it to be. So that if you should live a thousand years, you might still be growing in your estimation of those things which you knew the first day of your true conversion. For the deeper you dig into this precious Mine, the greater riches will still appear to you. There is an Ocean of excellency in one Article of your belief, and you will never find the *banks* or *bottom*, till you come to heaven, and then you will find that it had neither banks nor bottom.

And thus I have shewed you what confirmation & growth is needful for your *understandings*, even about the very *same truths*, which at first you knew. And now I shall add; 8. You must also labour to understand more truths for number than at the first you understood, and to reach to as much of the revealed will of God as you can, and not to stop in the *meer essentials*. For all divine revelations are precious, and of great use; and none must be neglected. And the knowledge of many other truths, is of some necessity to our clear understanding of the *essentials*; and also to our holding them fast and practising them. *Secret things belong to God, but things revealed, to us, and to our children, Deut. 29. 29.*

But

But here I must give you this further advice. 1. That you proceed in *due order*, from the *fundamental points* to those that *lye next them*; & do not overpass the points of *next necessity* and weight, and go to *higher* and less needful matters, before you are ready for them. 2. And also see that you receive all following truths that are taught you, as *flowing from the foundation*, and conjoynd with it. Disorderly proceedings have unspeakably wrong'd the souls of many thousands, when they are presently upon controversies and smaller matters, before they understand abundance of more necessary things that must be first understood. This course doth make them lose their labour, and worse; it deceiveth the understanding instead of informing it: and thereupon it perverts the *will* it self, and turns men to an heretical, proud, or perverse frame of spirit; and then it must needs mislead their *practises*, and cause them like deluded men to be *zealous in doing mischief*, while they think they are *doing good*. In *common matters* you can see, that you must learn and do things in their *due order*, or else you will but make fools of yourselves. Will you go to the top of the stairs or ladder, without beginning at the lower steps? Will you sow your ground before you manure or plow it? or can you reap before you sow it? Will you ride your colt before you break him? Will you rear an house before you frame it? Or will you teach your children Hebrew, and Greek, and Latine, before they learn English? or to read the hardest books before they learn the easiest? or can they read before they learn to spell, or know their letters? No more can you learn
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the difficult controversies in divinity (as about the exposition of obscure Prophecies, or doctrinal doubts,) till you have taken up before you those many great and necessary truths that lye between. It would make a wise man pity them and be ashamed to hear them, when young raw self-conceited Professors, will fall into confident expositions of *Daniel*, the Revelations, or the *Canticles*, or such like, or into disputes about free-will, or predestination, or about the many controversies of the times, when, alas, they are ignorant of a hundred truths (about the Covenants, Justification, and the like) which must be known before they can reach the rest!

By this much that I have said already, you may understand, that (though we should reach as far as we can in knowing all necessary revealed truths) yet the principal part of your growth in knowledge, when once you are converted, consisteth not in *knowing more* than you knew before, as to the *number* of truths, but in knowing *better the very same fundamental truths*, which you knew at first. This is the principal thing that I would here teach you. Abundance are deluded, by not understanding this; you see here you have seven several things in which you must daily grow in knowledge about the *same truths* which you first received. 1. You must see *better and sounder reasons and evidences* for the fundamental truths than you saw at first: or *more* such evidences than you did then perceive. 2. You must grow to a *clearer sight or apprehension* of those same evidences. 3. You must see truths more *methodically*, all as it were at *one view*, and all in their due proportion and place, as the members of a well com-
than

posed body; and how they grow together, and what strength one truth affords to another.

4. You must see every truth more *practically* than before, and know what use it is of, for your hearts and lives, and what you must do with it.

5. You must learn *more skill* in the *using* of these truths, when you know what they are good for; and must be better able to manage them on your selves and others.

6. You must know more *experimentally* than you did at first.

7. You must grow into a higher esteem of truths. All this you have to do, besides your growing in the *number* of truths. And I must tell you, that as it was these *Essentials* of Christianity that were the instrumental causes of your *first Conversion*, and were more needful and useful to you then, than ten thousand others: So it is the *very same points* that you must alwayes *live upon*, and the *Confirmation* and *growth* of your Souls in *these*, will be more useful to you than the adding of ten thousand more truths which yet you know not: And therefore take this advice as you love your peace and growth; *Neglect* not to know *more*; but bestow many and many hours in labouring to *know Better*, the great truths which you have received, for one hour that you bestow in seeking to know *more Truths* which you know not. Believe it, this is the safe and thriving way. You know already that *God is All-sufficient, and infinitely wise, and good, and powerful*: And you know not perhaps the *nature of free Will*, or of *Gods Decrees of Election and Reprobation*, or a hundred the like points. True knowledg of any of the revealed things of God, is very desirable: But yet, I must tell you, that you are fourty

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times more defective here in your knowledg of that of God which you do know, than of the other which you know not : that is, the want of more Degrees of this necessary knowledg is more dangerous to your Souls, than the total want of the less necessary knowledg. And the addition of more Degrees to the more needful parts of knowledg, will strengthen and enrich you more, than the knowing of less necessary things, which you knew not before at all. You know *Christ Crucified* already ; but perhaps you know not certain *Controversies* about *Church-Government*, or the definitions and distinctions of many matters in Divinity : It will be a greater growth now to your knowledg to know a little more of *Christ Crucified*, whom you know already, than to know these lesser matters, which you know not yet at all. If you had already a hundred pound in Gold, and not a penny of Silver, it will more enrich you to have another purse full of Gold, than a purse full of Silver, Trading in the richest Commodities, is likier to raise men to great estates, than trading for matters of a smaller rate. They that go to the Indies for Gold and Pearl, may be rich if they get but little in quantity : When he may be poor that brings home Ships laded with the greatest store of poor Commodity. That man that hath a double measure of the knowledg of God in Christ, and the clearest, and deepest, and most effectual apprehensions of the Riches of Grace and the Glory to come, and yet never heard of most of the Questions in *Scotus*, or *Ockam* or *Aquinas's* sums, is far richer in knowledg, and a much wiser man, than he that hath those *Controversies* at his fingers

gers ends, and yet hath but half his clearness and solidity of the knowledg of God and Christ, of Grace and Glory. There is enough in some One of the Articles of your Faith, in One of Gods Attributes, in One of Christs benefits, in One of the Spirits Graces, to hold you study all your lives, and afford you still an increase of knowledg. To know God the Father, Son and Spirit, and their relations to you and operations for you, and your Duties to them, and the way of Communion with them, is that knowledg in which you must still be growing, till it be perfected by the celestial beatifical Vision. Those be not the wisest men that can *answer most questions*; but those that have the *fullest intellectual reception* of the *infinite Wisdom*. You will confess that he is a wiser man that hath Wisdom to get and Rule a Kingdom; than he that hath wit enough to talk of a hundred trivial matters, which the other is ignorant of. That's the wisest Physician that can do most to save mens lives; and not he that can best read a Lecture of Anatomy, or is readiest in the terms of his Art. *Knowledge* is to be esteemed according to the *use* of it, and the *Dignity* of its *Object*; and not according to the *number* and *subtilty* of *notions*. And therefore I beseech you all that are young and weak in the Faith, take much more pains to grow in the *fuller* acquaintance with that *same Faith* which you have received, than to be acquainted with smaller controversial Truths which you never knew. Men use to call these *Higher points*, because they are more *difficult*; but certainly the Articles of your Faith are much *higher* in point of excellency, though they are

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lower in the due order of learning them, as the *Foundation* is the lowest part of the building, and is first laid, but is that which must bear up all the rest.

And here you must observe, how gracelessly and unlike to Christians those men speak, that say, They care not for reading such a Book, or hearing such or such a Minister, because he tells them no more than they know already]. And on that account some of them stay from Church, because they hear nothing but what they know already. Its a certain sign that they do *not know already*, the blessed nature of God, and the riches of Christ, which they say they know: For if they did, they could not hear or think too much of them? They would long to know more, and therefore to hear more of the same things. Its a sign the Minister takes the course that tends to your edification and enriching in knowledg, when he is most upon the great and most necessary truths. All Saints do make it their study *to comprehend the height, and breadth, and length, and depth, and know the Love of God in Christ*: but when they have done, they confess that it *passeth knowledg*, Eph. 3. 17, 18, 19. Its a graceless wicked Soul, in a state of damnation, that conceits he knows so much of God and Jesus Christ and the essentials of Christianity, that he cares not for hearing these things any more, but had rather have novelties and let these alone; and feeleth not need of knowing much more, and more of the same truths; and of using and living upon these vital Principles which he knows. You have eaten Bread, and drank Beer an hundred times; but perhaps you never did eat of
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Sturgeon or Whale, of a Bear or a Leopard, of Chestnuts or Pig-nuts, or many strange and dangerous fruits, in all your life. And yet I hope you will not seek after these because they are novelties, and give over eating Bread because you have eaten of it already? Nor will you churlishly refuse to go to a Feast, because there is no meat but what you have eaten of before. We have not a *new God* to Preach to you, nor a *new Christ*, nor a *new Spirit*, nor a *new Gospel*, nor a *new Church*, nor a *new Faith*, nor a *new Baptismal Covenant*, nor a *new Heaven*, or *Hope*, or *Happiness* to propound, *Gal. 1. 9, 10. Eph. 4. 3, 4, 5.* Your growth in *methods* and *definitions* and *distinctions*, and in *additional points* of knowledge, is principally to be valued as it clearerth your understandings in the forelaide *great essential points*, and brings you up to *God himself*. Some wretches think they have quickly learned past the essential Articles of the Faith, and ere long they are past the higher points; and shortly they are past the Scripture it self, and throw it by, as a Schollar that hath learnt one Book, and must be entred into another: They understand not that the Ministry and Spirit are but to teach them the word of the Gospel; but they think they must outgrow the Word and Ministry, and the Spirit must teach them some other Doctrine: or Gospel, which the written Word doth not contain. I pray mark the Apostles warning, *Heb. 13. 9.* [*Be not carryed about with divers and strange Doctrines; for it is a good thing that the heart be stablished with Grace.*] And *Eph. 4. 14.* [*That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carryed about with every wind of Doctrine, by the*

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sleight of men and cunning craftiness.—*

1. Having shewed you wherein your growth consisteth in the understanding, I shall be short in the rest, and next I must tell you wherein it consisteth in the Will.

And that is 1. When upon good understanding and deep consideration, you are more fixedly, habitually, absolutely and practically resolved for God and Glory than before. So that you are grown more beyond all shaking doubtfulness or wavering of mind, and beyond all unevenness, mutability and unconstancy. When a man is thus satisfied, that none but God hath title to him, or can make him happy, and that none but Christ can reconcile him to God, and that it were a madness to make any other choice, and thereupon is settled and firm as Mount Zion, and say [*Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee,*] Psal. 73. 25. When you are firmly resolved, that let God do with you what he will, and come of it what will, you will never choose another Master, or Saviour, or Rule, or Happiness, or Way, or Body than you are in; and will never forsake the path of holiness; this is the fixed stability of the Will, and the more of this, the more you grow.

2. And when you have the lowest esteem of the Creatures, and greatest and most resolved aversness to all that would draw you from God, and can meet the greatest worldly or fleshly allurements with a holy contempt; this shews a settled confirmed Will.

3. And also when you are speedy in holy Resolutions, and see nothing in a Temptation how great soever, that can make you demur upon it, or make a
stop

Establishment, growth, and perseverance. III

stop in a Christian course; but go on to duty as if the Tempter had said nothing to you, and the Flesh and the World had no interest in you; and you do not so much as stand to think on it, whether you should yield to sin or not, as abhorring to call such a matter into question: This shews a confirmed fixed *Will*: And the more of this, the more of Holiness.

III. The strength and growth of holy *Affections*, consisteth principally in these particulars; 1. When the Affections are *Lively*, and not *dull*; so that we make out after God and Heaven with vigor and alacrity. 2. When they are *ready at hand*, and not to *seek*, and need not a great deal ado to quicken them or call them in. 3. When they are *most pure* and *unmixed*, having least of the Creature and most of God in them. 4. But principally (and the surest point to try them by) when they contain in them, or accompany the foresaid Confirmation and Resolvedness of the *Will*: For it is more the *Willingness* that is in or with our Affections, than the *heat* of them that we must judge them by. 5. And lastly, when they follow the best guidance of the understanding; when they are hottest about the greatest matters, and not about the smaller or more doubtful things: When they are obedient and yielding to Faith and holy Reason, and not too ready to hearken to sense, and be moved about fleshly sensible things. In these things lyeth the growth of your affections.

IV. And then lastly for your *Conversations*, your stability and growth consisteth, 1. In the *Readiness* of your obedience. 2. In the *fulness* and *universal exactness* of it. 3. In the *Resolved*

112 *Directions to the Converted, for their conquest of all temptations that would pervert you.* 4. In the diligent use of all those *means* that may farther confirm and strengthen you. 5. In the *Evenness* of it, that it be constant and not mixt with scandals, and stops in the way, or stepping out into by-paths. 6. In your trustfulness and profitableness to others, according to the proportion of your Talents: that you study to do good, and do it with all the care and Wisdom and diligence you can. 7. In the *Spirituality* of it, that God be the principle and the end of all, and that all be animated from the believing consideration of his attributes, and the views of everlasting blessedness. So that you have such lively fixed intentions of God, that you can perceive that you do all, even common things, of purpose for his pleasure, will and glory; and that the love of God doth carry you about from duty to duty, and constrain you to it. 8. And lastly, in the *measure* of your present *attainments* of the *End and fruits* of your obedience. For a tast of these ends are *here* to be attained. When your inward Graces are more confirmed and increased, and your Talents are doubled, and when you bring God a great deal of honour in the World, so that by his Graces shining in your works, your Father is glorified; and when your selves are readier to go to God, and meet your Redeemer, and long more for his appearing: In all these consisteth, the stability, growth and excellency of your *conversations*.

And now by all that I have said you may see, wherein your stability, strength and growth doth *not consist*. 1. It doth not most or much consist in speculations or less useful Truths. 2. It doth
not

not consist in the meer heat of Affections: For Zeal may be misguided, and do hurt; and may prove sometime but a meer natural or distempered sinful passion. 3. It consisteth not in meer Fears, or Purposes that you are frightened into against your Wills. 4. Nor doth it consist in the common gifts of Grace or Nature. 5. Nor yet in running into groundless singularities, and unusual strains. But, in a word, it consisteth in *holy Love*, kindled by effectual faith. When a firmly believing Soul is fullest of Love to God, and Christ, and Holiness, this is the most Confirmed state of the Soul: and in this your chiefest growth consisteth.

DIRECT. IV.

My next advice to all young Christians for their Confirmation and Growth in Grace, is this.

Grow downwards in Humility; be low and small in your own eyes; and affect not to be high or great in the eyes of others; and still keep a deep apprehension of the greatness and danger of the sin of Pride; but specially of that called spiritual Pride.

IT is the Tree that hath the shallowest weakest rooting that most shaketh, and is soonest overthrown: The deeper roots, the higher growth, for the most part. The building
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that hath not a deep foundation, is soonest shaken and overthrown. Christ is our Foundation; and Humiliation digs deep and lets him in to the heart. Pride is commonly thought to be the Devils first or chiefeft sin: Sure I am it is the Proud that fall into his condemnation.

1 Tim. 3. 6. The Pride of our first Parents, affecting to be as Gods in knowledg, was the inlet of all our sin and misery: And the tempter still followeth the way that he hath found to be so successful. It is Pride that like a storm or tempest, doth set all the World in the rage and contention, and differences, and confusion, that we see them in. It is Pride that hath filled the Church with Divisions; and it's Pride that causeth the Apostacy of most that fall away. And the more men have of it, the less do they usually discern it in themselves: I am sure the less do they hate it and lament it. And though one would think that young beginners and weak Christians that have little to be proud of, should be out of the danger of this temptation, yet experience tells us that it's they that fall by it, more than the wiser and stronger Christians that have more to glory in. For the more men increase in Wisdom, the more do they know their own unworthiness, their emptiness, and ignorance and manifold sins: And the more do they know of the Holiness and jealousy of God; and the more do they know of the evil of sin, and see what abundance of knowledg and Grace they yet want. So that the more holy Wisdom and experience, the less pride. But folly is the Parent and Nurse of Pride. Children will be proud of toys and things of no value. There are two

or three things that make young Christians in greater danger of spiritual pride than others.

1. Because they come so lately out of darkness, and so great a change is made upon their Souls, that it makes them the more sensible of it ; and therefore the readier to have high thoughts of themselves. Though one would think that the remembrance of former folly, and late dejectedness should keep them low, yet with too many that's quickly gone, and they know not how to receive a comforting message, but they make it an occasion of lifting up. 2. The ignorance of these novices or young Christians is such, that they little know what abundance of things they are yet ignorant of. Little do they know what knowledge they yet want. They think there is little more to be reacht to than is in their sight, and therefore suppose themselves some body in the School of Christ, because they have learnt the first Lesson. 3. And by reason of this ignorance, they know not how to value the higher attainments and understandings of others ; but look on the wisest as little wiser than themselves, because they are unacquainted with the matter of their Wisdom, and therefore overlook it as if it were none, and consequently think too highly of themselves. 4. And withal, they have not that experience of their own hearts that should make them jealous of them, as antient Christians have.

The Humble Soul is still in an empty craving temper : He hungreth and thirsteth after Righteousness, and therefore shall be satisfied, *Mat.* 5. 6. No man setteth so high a price on Christ and Grace, and all the means of Grace. Even the

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the crums are welcome to him, which the proud
despise. *The full soul loaths the hony-comb: but to*
the hungry every bitter thing is sweet. Prov. 27. 7.
Therefore such beggars are welcome to God:
He hath respect to the humble contrite soul. *Isa.*
57. 15. and 66. 2. Psal. 51. 17. The hungry he
filleth with good, but the rich he sendeth empty away.
Luk. 1. 53. He giveth more grace to the humble,
when the proud are abhorred by him. *1 Pet. 5. 5.*
The Church of Laodicea that said, *I am rich,*
and increased with goods, and have need of nothing,
was miserable, and poor, and blinde, and naked.
Rev. 3. 17. As many that are proud of their ho-
nour and birth, run out of all by living above
their estates, when meaner persons grow rich,
because they are still gathering, and make much
of every little: So proud Professors of Religion
are in a Consumption of the Grace they have,
while the humble increase by making much of
every little help, which is sleighted and neglect-
ed by the proud, and by shunning all those spend-
ing courses, which the proud are plunged in. Be
sure to keep mean thoughts of your selves, of
your knowledg and parts, and grace and duties,
and be content to be mean in the esteem of o-
thers, if you would not be worse than mean in
the esteem of God.

DIRECT. V.

Exercise your selves daily in a life of Faith upon Jesus Christ; as your Saviour, your Teacher, your Mediator, and your King; as your Example, your Wisdom, your Righteousness, and your Hope.

ALL other studies and knowledg must be merely subservient to the study and knowledg of Christ, 1 Cor. 2. 2. That vain kind of Philosophy which St. Paul so much cautioneth Christians against, is so far yet from being accounted vain, that by many called Christians it is preferred before Christianity it self; and to shew that it is *Vain* while they overvalue it, they can shew no solid worth or vertue which they have got by it; but only a tumified mind, and an idle tongue like a tinkling Cymbal, 1 Cor. 13. 1. and 12. 31. and 2. 4. 14, 15, 16. and 1. 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 27. Col. 2. 8, 9. We are compleat in Christ, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, ver. 10. No study in the World will so much lead you up to God, and acquaint you with him, especially in his Love and Goodness, as the study of Christ, his Person, his Office, his Doctrine, his Example, his Kingdom, and his benefits. As the Deity is your ultimate end, to which all things else are but helps and means; so Christ is that great and principal means, by whom all other means are animated. Remember that you are in continual need of him, for direction, intercession, pardon,

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don, sanctification, for support and comfort, and
for peace with God. Let no *thoughts* therefore
be so *sweet* and *frequent* in your hearts, nor any
discourse so ready in your mouths (next to the
excellencies of the eternal Godhead) as this of
the design of mans Redemption. Let Christ be
to your Souls, as the Air, the Earth, the Sun,
and your Food, are to your bodies, without
which your life would presently fail. As you
had never come home to the Father but by him,
so without him you cannot a moment continue
in the Fathers love, nor be accepted in one duty,
nor be protected from one danger, nor be sup-
plied in any want: For it pleased the Father,
that in him should all fulness dwell, *Col. 1. 18,*
19. And by him it is that being justified by Faith,
we have peace with God, and have access by Faith
unto this Grace wherein we stand, and rejoyce in hope
of the Glory of God. *Rom. 5. 1, 2.* And it is in
him the Head that we must grow up in all things,
from whom the whole body doth receive it's increase.
Ephes. 4. 15, 16. You grow no more in Grace,
than you grow in the true knowledge and daily use
of Jesus Christ. But of this I will say no more,
because I have said so much in my *Directions for*
a sound Conversion,

DIRECT. VI.

Let the Knowledge and Love of God, and your obedience to him be the Works of your Religion; and the everlasting fruition of him in Heaven, be the continual end and ruling Motive of your Hearts and Lives: that your very Conversation may be with God in Heaven.

YOU are so far **HOLY** as you are **DIVINE** and **HEAVENLY**. A Christian indeed in casting up his accounts, being certain that this World doth make no man happy, hath been led up by Christ to seek a *Happiness* with God above: If you *live* not for this everlasting happiness, if you *trade* not for *this*, if *this* be not your *treasure*, your *hope* and *home*, the chief matter of your *desires*, *love* and *joy*, and if all things be not prest to serve it, and despised when they stand against it; you live not indeed a Christian life. **GOD** and **HEAVEN**, or **GOD** in **HEAVEN**, is the Life and Soul, the beginning and the end, the Sum, the All, of true Religion. And therefore it is that we are directed to lift up our Heads and Hearts, and begin our Prayers with [*Our Father which art in Heaven*] and end them with ascribing to *Him* the *Kingdom*, the *Power* and the *Glory* for ever.] It is not the *Creatures*, but God the *Creator*, that is the *Father*, the *Guide* and the *felicity* of Souls, and therefore the ultimate end and object of all
Re-

Religious actions and affections. *Dwell still upon God, and dwell in Heaven, if you would understand the nature and design of Christianity. Take God for all, that is, for God: Study after the knowledge of him in all his Works: Study him in his Word: Study him in Christ: And never study him barely to know him, but to know him that you may love him: Take your selves as dead when you live not in the Love of God: Keep still upon your hearts a lively sense of the infinite difference between him and the Creature. Look on all the World as a shadow, and on God as the substance. Take the very worst that man can do, to be in comparison of the punishments of God, but as a Flea-biting to the sorest death: And take all the dreaming pleasures of the World, to be lets in comparison with the joyes of Heaven, than one lick of honey is to a thousand years possession of all the felicities on earth. Think not all the pleasures, honours or riches of the world, to be worthy to be named in comparison of Heaven: nor the Greatest of Men, to be worthy to be once thought on in comparison of God. As one straw or feather won or lost, would neither much rejoyce or trouble you, if all the City or land were yours. So live as men whose eyes are open, and who discern a greater disproportion, between the portion of a worldling and a Saint. Let God be your King, your Father, your master, your friend, your wealth, your joy, your All. Let not a day go over your heads, in which your hearts have no converse with God in Heaven: when any trouble overtaketh you on Earth, look up to Heaven, and remember that it is there that Rest and Joy are prepared for belie-*

vers. When you are under any want or cross or sorrow, fetch not your comfort from any hopes of deliverance here on Earth, but from the place of your final full deliverance.. If you feel any strangeness and backwardness on your minds to Heavenly contemplations, do not make light of them, but presently by Faith get up to Christ, who must make your thoughts of Heaven familiar, and seek remedy before your estrangedness increase. The soul is in a sad condition when it cannot fetch comfort and encouragement from Heaven; for then it must have *none*, or *worse* than *none*. When the thoughts of Heaven will not sweeten all your crosses, and relieve your minds against all the encombrances of earth, your souls are not in a healthful state: It's time then to search out the cause, and seek a cure, before it come to worle.

There are three great causes of this dark and dangerous state of soul, which make the *thoughts of Heaven ineffectual* and *uncomfortable* to us, which therefore must be overcome with the daily care and diligence of your whole lives. 1. *Unbelief*, which maketh you look towards the life to come with *doubting* and *uncertainty*: And this is the most common, radical, powerful and pernicious impediment to a heavenly life. The second is the *Love of present things*, which being the vanity of a poor low fleshly mind, the reviving of *Reason* may do much to overcome it; but it's the *sound Belief* of the life to come that must indeed prevail. The third is the inordinate *Fear of Death*, which hath so great advantage in the constitution of our nature, that it is commonly the *last enemy* which we overcome, (as Death it

self is the *Last enemy* which Christ overcometh for us). Bend all your strength, and spend your daies in striving against these three great impediments of a heavenly conversation: And remember that so far as you suffer your hearts to retire from Heaven, so far they retire from a life of Christianity and peace.

DIRECT. VII.

In the work of Mortification, let SELF-DENYAL be the First and Last of all your study, care and diligence.

Understand how much of the *fallen depraved* state of man consisteth in the sin of SELFISHNESS: How he is sunk into *Himself* in his fall from the *Love of God*, and of his *Neighbour*; of the *publick* or *private good* of *others*: And how this inordinate *Self-love* is now the grand enemy of all true *Love to God or Man*; and the root and heart of *Covetousness, Pride, Voluptuousness*, and all iniquity. Let it be your work therefore all your dayes to mortifie it, and watch against it. When you feel your selves partial in your own cause, and apt to be drawing from others to your selves, in point of reputation, precedency or gain, and apt to make too great a matter of every word that is spoken against you, or every little wrong that is done you, observe then the pernicious root of *Selfishness*, from whence all this mischief doth proceed. Read more of this in my *Treasure of Self-denial*.

DIRECT. VIII.

Take your corrupted fleshly Desires, for the greatest enemy of your Souls; and let it be every day your constant work, to mortify the Flesh, and to keep a watch upon your lusts and appetite and every sense.

Remember that our *senses* were not made to govern themselves, but to be governed by right Reason: And that God made them at the first to be the ordinary passage of his Love and mercy to our hearts, by the means of the Creatures which represent or manifest him unto us: But now in the depraved state of man, the *Senses* have cast off the Government of Reason, and are become the Ruling power, and so man is become like the Beasts that perish. Remember then, that to be *sensual* is to be *brutish*: And though Grace doth not destroy the appetite and sense, yet it subjecteth it to God and Reason. Therefore let your appetite be pleased in nothing, but by the allowance of right Reason: And think not that you have reason to take any meats or drink or sport, meerly because your *flesh desireth* it: but consider whether it will do you good or hurt, and how it conduceth to your ultimate end? It is a base and sinful state to be in servitude to your appetite and sense! When by using to please it, you have so increased its desires, that now you know not how to deny it and displease it. When you have taught it to be like a hungry dog or swine, that will never be quiet till his hunger be satisfi-

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ed; Whereas a well-governed appetite and
sense is easily quieted with a rational denial.
Rom. 8. 1, 6, 7, 8, 13. and 13. 13, 14. 1 Pet. 2.
11. 1 John 2. 16.

DIRECT. IX.

*Take heed lest you fall in love with the World
or any thing therein, and lest your thoughts of
any place or condition which you either pos-
sess or hope for, do grow too sweet and plea-
sing to you.*

FOr there is no one perisheth, but for loving
some Creature more than God : And com-
placency is the formal act of Love. Love not the
World, nor the things that are in the World, for if any
man love the World, the love of the Father is not in
him, 1 John 2. 15. Value all earthly things as
they conduce to your Masters Service, or to your
Salvation ; and not as they tend to the pleasing
of your Flesh : It is the commonest and most
dangerous folly in the World, to be eager to
have our houses and lands and provisions and
every thing about us in the most *pleasing* and
amiable state : when as this is the acknowledged
way to Hell, and the only poyson of the Soul.
Are you not in more danger of overloving a
pleasing and *prosperous* condition, than a bitter and
vexatious state ? and of overloving Riches, ho-
nour, and sensual fulness and delights, rather
than Poverty, reproach, and mortification ? And
do you not know that if ever you be damned, it
will

will be for *loving* the World *too much*, and God too little? Is it for nothing that Christ describeth a Saint to you as a *Lazarus* in poverty and sores, and a damned wretch as one that was *clothed in Purple and Silk*, and *saved sumptuously every day*, Luke 16. Did not Christ know what he did when he put the rich man upon this tryal, to part with all his worldly riches, and *follow Christ* for a *treasure in heaven*? Luke 18. 22, 13. All things must be esteemed as *loss* and *dung* for the *knowledge of Christ*, and the hopes of heaven, if ever you will be saved, Phil. 3. 6, 7, 8. You must so live by *Faith*, and not by *sight*, as not to look at the temporal things *that are seen*, but at the *things eternal which are unseen*, 2 Cor. 4. 17, 18. and 5. 7, 8. And one that is running in a race for his life, would not so much as turn his head to *look back* on any one that called to him to stay; or to *look aside* to any one that would speak with him in his way. Thus must we *forget* the things that are *behind*, as counting them not worthy a *thought* or *remembrance* or a *look*, Phil. 3. 13, 14. If you feel this poison seife upon your hearts, and your condition in the world (or at least your *Hopes*) begin to grow too *sweet* and *pleasing* to you, presently make hast to Christ your Physician, and take his antidote, and cast up the poyson as you love your Souls. You must know no other *pleasure* in your outward mercies, but as God appeareth in and by them, and as they tend to profit you, and further you in Gods Service, or to promote your own or others good; but not as they are *provision for the flesh*, Rom. 13. 13, 14. See my Book of *Crucifying the World*.

DIRECT. X.

Cast not your selves wilfully upon temptations, but avoid them as far as lawfully you can: And if you are cast upon them unwillingly, resist them resolutely, as knowing that they come to entice you into Sin and Hell, from God and your everlasting happiness; And therefore be well acquainted with the particular Temptations of every company, calling, relation, business, time, place, and condition of life; and go alwayes furnished with particular Antidotes against them all.

Strong Grace will do no more against strong Temptations, than weak Grace against weak ones. Temptation is the way to sin, and sin is the way to Hell. If you saw the dangerousness of your station, when you cast your self upon temptations, you would tremble and fly as for your lives. I take that man as almost gone already, who chooseth temptations, or avoideth them not when he may. Especially be acquainted with the diseases and greatest dangers of your Soul; and there keep up a constant watch. Are you lyable to a gluttonous pleasing of your appetite? Avoid the temptation; set not that before you which may be your snare: Let a little, and that of the least tempting kind of food, be your ordinary provision. Sit not at the Gluttons Table, (who fareth deliciously every day) if you would escape the gluttons sin and misery.

Or

Or if the provision be of other mens disposal, at least rise quickly and be gone. Are you inclined to please your appetite in drinking? Avoid such strong drink as may *tempt* your appetite; and avoid the *place* and *company* that *draweth* you to it. Are you inclined to *fleshly lust*? Avoid the presence of such of the other Sex as are a temptation to you: Look not on them, nor talk not of them; but above all take heed of *nearness* and *familiarity*, and *privacy* with them; and of all *opportunity* of sin. When the Devil hath brought the bait to your hand, and telleth you, now you may sin without any molestation or discovery, you are then in a very dangerous case. Some that think they would not be guilty of the sin, will yet *tempt themselves*, and delight to have it *in their power*, and to have the *opportunity* of sinning, and to come as near it as they dare; And these are gone before they well perceive their danger. So if you are inclined to *Pride and Ambition*, avoid the society of those that tempt you to it: Come not among Superiors and Gallants, or such as kindle your ambition. A retired life, in company of mean and humble persons, is fittest for one that hath your disease. *Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate*, Rom. 12. 16.

But if you cannot avoid the *Temptation*, be sure yet to avoid the *sin*; Take it as if you saw and heard the Devil himself perswading you to sin, and damn your Souls. Abhor the motion, and give not the Devil a patient hearing, when you know what he cometh about: Resolution escapeth many a danger, which those are ruined by, who stand disputing and dallying with the

Tempter. Especially look about you, when the Tempter employeth *Great men*, or *Learned men*, or *Godly men*, or *nearest friends*, to be his instruments. And if their *subtily* puzzle you, go to the stronger and more experienced Christians for advice and help. *Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation*, *Matth. 6. 13.* and *26. 41.* It is a dreadful thing to think what persons temptations have overthrown, *Luke 18. 13.* *Heb. 6. 6, 7.* How Wise, and Learned, and excellent men have been over-witted by Satan, and sinned like fools, when they have let go their watch: If we be as resolved as *Peter*, temptations may quickly change our resolutions, if God leave us to our selves, and we grow presumptuous or secure: And then our very Reason will lose its power; and false representations will make things appear to us quite contrary to what indeed they are; and those reasonings will seem probable to us, which at another time we could easily see through as meer deceit. Temptation as it prevaieth, doth damp and cast asleep our Graces, and charm and bewitch all the faculties of the Soul, *1 Tim. 6. 9.*

DIRECT. XI.

If it be possible, make choice of such a Pastor for the help and guidance of your Souls, as is judicious, experienced, humble, holy, heavenly, faithful, diligent, lively, and peaceable; that liveth not in separation from the generality of the sober Godly Ministers and Christians where he liveth.

1. **T**Hink not of being sufficient for your selves, without the help of those whom Christ hath appointed to be watchmen for your Souls, *Heb. 13. 7. 17. 24.* As you cannot live without the teaching and the Grace of Christ; so Christ doth vouchsafe you *his teaching*, and *his grace*, by the Ministry of his own Officers, whom he hath appointed to that end and use. It is marvellous to observe, how Christ chose rather to convert men by the Preaching and Miracles of his Apostles, than by his own: And how he would not fully Convert *Paul* without the Ministry of *Ananias*, though he spoke to him from Heaven himself, and reasoned the case with him against his Persecution. And how he would not fully Convert *Cornelius* and his Household, without the Ministry of *Peter*, though he sent an Angel to direct him to a Teacher: Nor would he convert the *Ethiopian* Eunuch without the Ministry of *Philip*, nor the Jaylor without the Ministry of *Paul* and *Silas*, though he wrought a Miracle to prepare for his Conversion, *Acts 16.*
and

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and 10. And Paul must plant, and Apollo must water, before God will give the increase, 1 Cor. 3. 6. And though all true Christians are taught of God, and must call no man on earth the Master of their Faith but Christ, 1 Thess. 4. 9. John 6. 45. Mat. 23. 8, 9. Yet have they their Teachers, Fathers, and instructors under Christ, who are helpers of their joy, though they have not dominion over their Faith, and are Overseers, though not Lords and Owners of the Flock, and are Ministers of Christ by whom he teacheth, and stewards of the Mysteries of God, and Ambassadors by whom he beseecheth sinners to be reconciled to God, having committed to them the word of reconciliation, Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13, 14. 1 Cor. 4. 1, 15. Acts 20. 28. 2 Cor. 1. 24. 1 Pet. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. 2 Cor. 5. 18, 19, 20. These are Labourers together with God upon his husbandry and building; some being Master-builders, and others Superstructors, 1 Cor. 3. 9, 10. Christ knew the necessity that the Infants of his Family had of such Nurses, and he knew what numbers of such weak ones there would be in comparison of the strong; or else he had never appointed the strong to such an Office: And having appointed it, he will keep up the honour of his Officers, and will send you his Alms, your food, your Physick, your Pardon, your Privileges by their hands. If you be drawn by Seducers to forsake or neglect the Ministry of Christs Officers, you forsake or neglect your helps and mercies, you refuse his Grace, you are like Infants that scorn their Nurses help; and like Subjects who reject all the Officers of the King, and like the Chickens that forsake the Hen; you forsake the School and Church of Christ,

Christ, and may expect to be quickly caught up by the Devil, as straglers that have no defence or guide.

2. Yet is there great difference between one Minister or Pastor and another, as much as between Physicians, Lawyers, or men of any other function. And there being no case in the world that you are so much concerned to be careful in, as the instructing and conduct and safety of your souls, you have exceeding great reason to take heed whom you choose to commit the care and conduct of your Souls to. It is not enough to say, that *He is a true Ordained Minister*, and that *his administrations are not nullities*, no more than to say of an ignorant Physician, or Cowardly Captain, that he hath a valid *License or Commission*; when for all that, if you trust him, it may cost you your lives. Nor is it a wise mans answer to say that *God giveth his Grace by the worst as soon as by the best, and by the weakest as soon as by the strongest, and therefore I need not be so careful in my choice*. For though God have not confined the working of his Spirit to the most excellent means, yet *ordinarily* he worketh according to the means he useth: And this both *Scripture*, *Reason*, and daily *experience* fully prove. God worketh *rationaly* on man as man; that is, as a *rational free agent*, by *Moral* operation, and not by a meer Physical injection of his Grace. When we see the man that is made wise unto Salvation by meer infusion of Wisdom, without a Teacher or the study of the Word of God, or when we see God work by his Word as by a charm, that a few words shall convert a man, though the speaker or hearer understood them not, then we may
hearken

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hearken to this conceit: And then we may think
that a Heretick may as well teach you the truth
as the Orthodox, or a Schismatick teach you
Unity and Peace as well as a Catholick peace-
able Pastor; or a man that is ignorant of the
mysteries of Regeneration and holy Commu-
nion with God, may best teach you that which
he knoweth not himself, and an enemy to *Piety*
and *Charity*, may teach you to be *Pious* and *Cha-
ritable* as well as any other. But I need not say
much more of this, for all parties would never
so strive to have such Ministers as they like, and
to put out such as they dislike, if they thought
not that the difference between Ministers and
Ministers were very great.

See therefore that the *Guide* whom you choose
for your Souls be 1. *Indicions*; for an *injudici-
ous* man may pervert the Scripture, and lead you
into Error and Heresie and sin before you are
aware: As an unskillful Coachman may soon
overturn you, or an unskillful Waterman may
drown you: yea though he be a *zealous fervent*
Preacher, yet if he be *injudicious*, he may igno-
rantly give you Poison in your food, as the ex-
perience of this age hath lamentably proved.

2. See if possible that he be an *experienced*
man, that knoweth by *experience on himself* not
only what it is to be *regenerate*, and *sanctified*,
and made a new Creature, but also how all the
combate between the Spirit and the Flesh is to be
managed, and what are the methods and strata-
gems of the tempter, and what are the chief
helps and defensatives of the Soul, and how they
are all to be used: For it is not harder to be a
Indicions Physician, or *Lawyer*, or *Souldier*, with-
out

out experience, than a judicious Pastor. And therefore the *Holy Ghost* commandeth that *he be not a novice*, or raw unexperienced Christian, *1 Tim. 3. 6.*

3. See that he be *Humble*, for if he be puffed up with pride, he falleth into the condemnation of the Devil, *1 Tim. 3. 6.* And then he will either scorn the labour of the Ministry as a drudgery (to preach in season and out of season, to beseech and exhort and stoop to the poorest of the flock): or else he will speak perverse things to draw away Disciples after him, *Acts 20. 30.* or he will as *Diotrephes*, reject the Brethren as loving himself to have the preheminance, *3 John 9. 10.* and will Oversee the Church by constraint, for filthy lucre, as being a Lord over Gods heritage, *1 Pet. 5. 2, 3.* (See Doctor Hammond on the Text.)

4. See that he be *Holy* in his life; for though this be not essential to his Office, yet the unholy are unexperienced, yea and have a secret enmity in their hearts against that Holiness which they should daily Preach; and will usually be shewing it in their close disgracing discouraging speeches, against that serious Piety which they should promote: And they will neglect most of the personal care of their Flock; and will unpreach by their lives the good which they Preach by their tongues, and harden and embolden the people in their sins, and make them believe that they believe not what they Preach themselves. Choose not an enemy of Holiness to lead you in the way of holiness (a way that he never went himself), nor an enemy of Christ to conduct you in the Christian warfare, when he is a servant of the Devil, the world and flesh, against whom you fight.

5. See

5. See that he be of a *Heavenly mind*, or else his Doctrine will be unfavoury and dry, and he will be Preaching some speculations or barren Controversies, instead of *Heavenly edifying truth*.

6. See that he be *faithful and diligent* in his Ministry, as one that knoweth the worth of Souls and will not sell them or betray them to the Devil for *filthy lucre*, or his fleshly ends; nor *make Merchandise* of them, as desiring rather *theirs than them*, and preferring the Fleece before the safety of the Flock. But one that imitateth the pattern *Acts 20.* and in *meekness instructeth those that are opposers*, 2 Tim. 2. 25, 26. 2 Pet. 3. 3. 1 Cor. 4. 2. Rom. 16. 17, 18. 1 Pet. 5. 3, 4. 2 Cor. 12. 14.

7. See that he be a *Lively serious* Preacher; for all will be little enough to keep up a *lively seriousness* in such dull and frozen hearts as ours: A cold Preacher with cold hearts, is like to make cold work. He that speaks senselessly and sleepily about such matters as Heaven and Hell, doth by the *manner* of his speech contradict the *matter*. When hard heartedness and security and deadness and lethargick drowsiness, is the common and dangerous disease of Souls, let him that loveth his Soul and would not perish by his disease, make use of a Physician and remedy that is suited to the cure, and not of one to rock him asleep, or give him an opiate to increase his malady.

8. See also that he be one that is of a truly *Catholick* spirit; not addicted to a *Sett*, nor to *Divisions* in the Church, nor one that liveth in a separation or distance from the generality of the godly sober Ministers, For you take him not for

for your Guide, as separated from the Catholick Church, but as united to it, and a Member of it; as valuing the Judgment of *all the Church* above the judgment of *any one Pastor*, and knowing that you are your selves to be kept in the unity of the Church, and not seduced into a Sect; and that the Pastors are to be the *bonds and ligaments* of the body, that by their help it may grow up in *love and unity*, and not the *dividers* of the body, Eph. 4. 13, 14, 15, 16. As Captains and inferior Officers in an Army, that are to conduct each Souldier in *Unity* with the *Army*, and not to separate, and make every *Troop* or *Regiment* an *Army* by it self, that *they* may be the petty Generals. In a word, read some good *Visitation Sermons*, which tell you what a Minister must be, and choose, if possible, to live under such a Minister; I say, *if possible*; for I know to many it is not possible. *Wives*, and *Children*, and *Servants*, (while they are bound) cannot leave their *Husbands*, *Parents*, or *Masters*: and strong Christians who are called to do good to others, must prefer that before such advantages to themselves, and many other impediments may deny men such a blessing: But yet I say, *undervalue* not so great a mercy, and neglect it not where lawfully it may be had, and prefer nothing before it (as a just impediment) which is not really *more worth*. And remember that *Divines* do commonly resolve the case of the *Infidel Nations* of the World, that they are unexcusable in their Infidelity, because when they hear that other Nations profess to know the way to Heaven, they do not in so great a case go over Sea and Land to enquire after the Doctrine which we profess, And

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if the Tartarians, Indians, and other Nations are bound to send to Christian nations, for Preachers of the Gospel, I only leave you proportionably to measure your case by theirs (allowing for the disproportion): And to consider how far you should deny your worldly profit in removing your habitations, for such helps as your own necessities require.

DIRECT. XII.

Make choice of such Christians for your familiar friends and the companions of your lives, as are holy, humble, heavenly, serious, mortified, charitable, peaceable, judicious, experienced and fixed in the ways of God; and not of ungodly persons, or proud self-conceited, censorious, dividing, injudicious, unexperienced, sensual, worldly, opinionative, superficial, luke-warm or unsettled Professors.

THe Reasons of this Direction you may perceive in what I said under the last. Your company is a matter of exceeding great concernment to you, as one of the greatest helps or hindrances, comforts or discomforts of all your lives, especially those that you dwell with, and those that you choose for your familiars and bosome friends. And therefore (so far as Gods Providence doth not forbid you, and make it impossible) choose such as are here described; or at least *one such* for your *bosome friend*, if you
can

can have acquaintance with no more. It is of unspeakable importance to your Salvation, with whom you are associated for *most familiar* converse. A good companion will teach you what you know not, or remember you of that which you forget, or stir you up when you are dull, or warm you when you are cold, and watch over you and warn you of your danger, and save you from the poison of ill companions. O what a help and delight it is, to have a holy, judicious, faithful friend to open your heart to, and to walk with in the *wayes* of life! And how exceeding hard is it to scape sin and hell, and get well to Heaven, in company and familiarity of the servants of the Devil, who are posting unto Hell? Let not your companions be *worse* than your selves, lest they make you worse; but as much *wiser* and *better* as you can procure. See *Ecclesj. 4. 9, 12. Psal. 16. 2. and 119. 63. Prov. 13. 20.*

DIRECT. XIII.

Subdue your passions, and abhor all uncharitable principles and practises, and live in love; maintaining peace in your families, and with your neighbours, but especially in the Church of God.

Love as you would be loved; yea, **L**ove if you would be loved: for there is no surer way to purchase love. And love because you are so
Lreely.

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freely loved, by that God whose wrath you have so oft deserved: Let the thankful feeling of his Love in Christ, even turn you wholly into love, to God and man: Abhor every *thought* and *word* and *deed*, which is contrary to love, and tendeth to the hurt of others: And hate the backbitings and bitter words of any, which tend to make another odious, and to destroy your love to any one that God commandeth you to love. Allow that moderate passion which is the *fruit of love*, and tendeth only to *do good*; but resist that which inclineth you to *hatred*, or to *do evil*. The more men *wrong* you, remember that you are the more watchfully to maintain *your love*, knowing that these temptations are sent by the Devil on purpose to destroy and quench it, and fill your heart with uncharitableness and wrath. Give place to the *wrath* of others, and stand not resisting it by words or deeds, *Rom. 12. 18, 19, 20. Recompense to no man evil for evil*, in word or action, *ver. 17*. Especially be most tender of the *Union* of true Christians, and of the Churches peace. When you hear the men of several Sects representing one another as *odious*, understand that it is the language of the Devil to draw you from love, into hatred and divisions: And when you must speak odiously of mens sin, speak charitably of their persons, and be as ready to speak of the good that is in them, as of the evil. Believe not that dividing ungrounded Doctrine, which telleth you that you cannot sufficiently disown the Errors of any party in Doctrine, and Worship, and Discipline, without a separation or withdrawing from their Communion; and which telleth you that you are guilty of the Ministerial

nisterial faults of every Pastor that you joyn with, or of the faults of all that Worship which you are present at (which would first separate you from every worshipping society and person upon earth, and then lead you to give over the worshipping of God your selves.) You must *Love Christians as Christians*, though they have errors and faults repugnant to their Christianity: And you must *joyn in Worship with Christians as Christians*, though their Worship hath errors and faults repugnant to the right order and manner of Worship: so be it you joyn not in that Worship which is *substantially* evil, and such as God doth utterly disown; Or that you commit no actual sin your selves, or that you *approve* not of the errors and faults of the Worshippers, and justify not their smallest evil; Or that you prefer not defective faulty Worship before that which is more pure and agreeable to the Will of God. For while all the Worshippers are faulty and imperfect, all their Worship will be so too: And if your actual sin when you *Pray or Preach defectively your selves*, doth not signify that you *approve* your faultiness; much less will your *presence* prove that you allow of the faultiness of others. The business that you come upon is to joyn with a *Christian Congregation* in the *use of those Ordinances which God hath appointed*, supposing that the Ministers and Worshippers will all be sinfully defective, in method, order, words, or circumstances: And to bear with that which God doth bear with, and not to refuse that which is *Gods* for the adherent faults of *men*, no more than you will refuse every dish of meat which is unbanishly Cooked, as long as there is no

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poyson in it, and you prefer it not before better;
1 Cor. 1. 10. and 3. 1, 2, 3. with 11. 17, 18, 21.
Rom, 15. 1, 2.

DIRECT. XIV.

Keep up a constant Government over your Thoughts and Tongues; especially against those particular sins which you are stronglyest tempted to, and which you see other Christians most overtaken with.

Keepe your *Thoughts* imployed upon something that is good and profitable; either about some useful Truths, or about some duty to God or man, of your general or particular Calling; yea about *all* these in their several seasons: Learn how to watch your thoughts, and stop them at their first excursions; and how to quicken them and make them serviceable to every grace, and every duty. You can never improve your solitary hours, if you have not the Government of your Thoughts.

And as the *Thoughts* must be governed because they are the first and *intimate* actings of good or evil; so the *Tongue* must be Governed as the *first* expresser of the mind, and the first instrument of good or hurt to others. Especially take heed of *these sins* which the *faultiness* of most Professors of Religion doth warn you to avoid. 1. An ordinary course of vain jesting, and unprofitable talk. 2. Provoking, passionate, inconsiderate words, that tend to kindle wrath in others. 3. Back-

3. Backbiting, censuring, and speaking evil of others without any just call, when it is either upon uncertain reports, or uncharitable suspicion, or tendeth more to hurt than good. 4. A forward venting of our own conceits, and a confident pleading for our uncertain, unproved Opinions in Religion, and a contentious wrangling for them, as if the Kingdom of God lay in them. And a forwardness in all company to be the Speakers rather than the Hearers, and to talk in a Magisterial Teaching way, as if we took our selves to be the wisest, and others to have need to learn of us. But especially take heed of speaking evil of those that have wronged you, or of those that differ from you in some tollerable Opinions in Religion: And hate that devilish uncharitable vice, which maketh many ready to *believe any thing, or say any thing, be it never so false, of those that are against their Sect; yea of whole parties of men that differ from them, when there is not one of a thousand of all the party that ever they were acquainted with, or ever could prove the thing by of which they are accused.* By the means of these bold uncharitable reports, the Devil hath unspeakably gained against Christ; and the Kingdom of malice hath won upon the Kingdom of Love; and most Christians are easier known to be *factious by hating or slandering one another, than they can be known to be Christs Disciples by loving one another.* And while every Sect without remorse doth *speak reproachfully and hatefully of the rest, they learn hereby to hate one another, and harden the Infidel and ungodly world, in hating and speaking evil of them all: So that a Turk*

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or Heathen need no other witness of the odiousness of all Christians, than the venomous words which they speak against each other. And as *foul words* in quarrels prepare for *blows*; so these malicious investives upon differences in Religion, prepare for the cruellest persecutions.

From my own observation, which with a grieved soul, I have made in this Generation, I hereby give warning to this and all succeeding Ages, that if they have any regard to *Truth* or *Charity*, they take heed how they believe any factious partial Historian or Divine, in any evil that he saith of the *party* which he is against: For (though there be good and credible persons of most parties, yet) you shall find that passion and partiality prevailleth against Conscience, Truth, and Charity in most that are sick of this Disease. And that the *envious zeal* which is described *Jam. 3.* doth make them think they do God service, first in *believing* false reports, and then in *venting* them, against those that their zeal or faction doth call the enemies of truth, so that there is little credit to be given to their reproaches farther than some *better evidence* is brought to prove the thing. Nay it would astonish a man to read the impudent lies which I have often read, obtruded upon the World with such confidence, that the Reader will be tempted to think, *Surely all this cannot be false.* Yea about *publick* words or actions, where you would think that the multitude of Witnesses would deter them from speaking it, if it were not true; and yet all as false as tongue can speak. Therefore believe not *Pride*, or *Faction*, or *Malice* in any evil that it saith, unless you have better evidence of the truth.

Most

Most Christian is that advice of Dr. H. More, that all Parties of Christians would mark all the Good which is in other Parties, and be more forward to speak of that than of the Evil: And this would promote the work of Charity in the Church, and the interest of Christianity in the World; whereas the overlooking of all that's good, and aggravating all the evil (and falsely feigning more than is true) is the work of greatest service to the Devil, and of greatest enmity to Christianity and Love, that I know commonly practised in the World. Keep your tongues from all such heliish work as this,

DIRECT. XV.

Let every state of life and Relation that you are in, be sanctified unto God, and conscionably used: And to that end understand the advantages and duties of every condition and Relation, and the sins and hinderances and dangers which you are most lyable to.

THe duties of our Relations are a great part of the work of a Christians life: As Magistrates and Subjects, Pastors and Flocks, Parents and Children, Husband and Wife, Masters and Servants; as Superiors in Gifts or Places, or Inferiors or equals; as Neighbors and companions. In our Teaching and learning, ruling and obeying, buying and selling. Be contionable in all these which are your own Relations, if you will live as Christians and be acceptable unto God. An

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ungodly or oppressing *Magistrate*, a murmuring
rebellious *Subject*, an ungodly, negligent or fa-
ctious *Pastor*, an unteachable, refractory, ungod-
ly *Flock*, a *Husband*, *Parent*, or *Master*, with-
out Religion, Love, or Justice, a *Wife* or *Child*
or *Servant*, without Love and dutiful obedience,
and faithful diligence; a proud contemptuous
Superior, a malicious censorious *inferiour*, an un-
just uncharitable *Neighbor*; a deceitful *buyer* or
seller, *borrower* or *lender*, and a self-seeking
friend, and seducing unprofitable *companion*; are
all as far from pleasing God by the rest of their
works or profession of Religion, as they
are from being obedient to his will: They pro-
voke him to abhor their Prayers and Profes-
sion, and to tell them that he will rather
have *Obedience than Sacrifice*. If you are false
to men, you are not true to God. It is he
that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness, that
is accepted of him: and the unrighteous shall not
inherit the Kingdom of God.

DIRECT. XVI.

Live as those that have all their powers, receivings and opportunities to do Good with in the World; and must be answerable how they have improved all: And as those that believe that the more Good they do, the more they do receive, and the greater is the honour, the profit, and the pleasure of their lives.

TO do no harm, is an honour which is common to a stone or a clod of Clay, with the most innocent man. If this were all the excellency that you aim at, it were better that you had never been born; for then you would certainly have done no harm: Remember that to do good is the highest imitation of God, supposing that it proceed from *Holy Love*, and be done to the *Pleasing and Glorifying of God*, that the *Principle* and the *End* be suitable to the work. Remember who hath told you that it is more blessed to give than to receive, *Acts 20. 35.* And hath promised that *He that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophets reward; and he that receiveth a Righteous man in the name of a Righteous man, shall receive a Righteous mans reward: and whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a Cup of cold water only, in the name of a Disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward (supposing that he have no better to give), Matth. 10. 41, 42. Give*

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to every man that asketh of thee (according to thy ability), *Give and it shall be given to you*, Luke 6. 30, 38. and 12. 33. Take that day or hour as lost in which you do no good (directly or preparatorily): And take that part of your estate as lost, with which directly or remotely you do no good. Remember how the Judgment must pass on you at last, according to the improvement of your several Talents, *Matth. 25*. When your time is past, and your *estates* are gone, or your understandings or your strength decayed, and your power and greatness is levelled with the poorest, it will be an unspeakable comfort to you, if you are able to say, *We laid them out sincerely to our Masters use*; and an unspeakable terror to you to say, *They were lost and cast away on the service of the Flesh*. If therefore you are *Rulers*, and are entrusted with *Power*, study how to do all the good with your *Power* that possibly you can: If you are *Ministers of Christ*, lay out your time and strength and parts in doing good to the Souls of all about you; study how you may be most serviceable to the Church and Cause of Christ. If you are *rich men*, study how to do all the good with your *Riches* that possibly you can do (not violating the order appointed you by God): In your Neighbourhoods, and in all your Families and Relations, study to do the greatest good you can. Take it thankfully as a great mercy to your selves, when opportunity to do good is offered you: And content not your selves to do a little, while you are able to do more: *Gal. 6. 7, 8, 9, 10. Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap: For he that soweth to his flesh,*

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Flesh, shall of the Flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap everlasting Life. And let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good to all men, especially unto them who are of the household of Faith. 2 Cor. 9. 6. He which soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully: Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver. Heb. 13. 16. To do good, and to communicate forget not, for with such Sacrifices God is well pleased. Ephes. 3. 10. For we are his Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good works, which God hath ordained, that we should walk in them. Let doing good be the business and imployment of your lives; Preferring still the publick good before the private good of any; and the good of mens Souls before that of the body. But yet neglecting none, but doing the lesser in order to the greater.

Object. But I am a poor obscure person, that have neither abilities of mind or body or estate; and what good can I do?

*Ans^r. There is no rational person that is not entrusted with One Talent at the least, Matth. 25. and that is not in a capacity of doing good in the World, if they have but hearts and be but willing. If you had neither money to give, nor tongues to speak for God, and to provoke others to do good, yet a Holy, humble, heavenly, patient, blameless life, is a powerful means of doing good, by shewing the excellency of Grace, and convincing the Ungodly, and stopping the mouths of the enemies of Piety, and honouring the
waies*

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 waies of God in the World: Such a holy, harm-
 less, exemplary life, is a continual, and a pow-
 erful Sermon: And for giving, *if there be first a*
willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man
hath, and not according to that he hath not, 2 Cor.
 8. 12. If you are unfeignedly willing to give
 if you *had it*, God taketh it as done: What you
 would have given, is set down on your account as
 given indeed. The Widdows two mites were
 praised by Christ as a bountiful gift, and a Cup
 of cold water is not unrewarded to the willing
 Soul. No one therefore is excusable that li-
 veth unprofitably in the World. But yet men
 of Power and Parts and Wealth have the greatest
 reckoning to make: Their ten Talents must
 have a proportionable improvement: It is a
 great deal of good that they must do: For to
 whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much re-
 quired; and to whom men have committed much, of
 him they will ask the more, Luke 12. 48.

DIRECT, XVII.

*Redeem your Time, and highly value every mi-
 nute; and spare for no labour in the work of
 your Salvation: Dream not of an easie, idle,
 sluggish life, as sufficient to your high and
 glorious ends: Nor rest not in a customary
 and outside way of duty, without regard to the
 Life and the success.*

IF any thing in all the World require all our
 power and time, it is that for which all our
 powers

powers and time are given us ; and which we are sure will a thousand fold recompense us for all : O what a sottish kind of stupidity is it, for a man to trifle in the way to eternity, that hath an endless life of joy or sorrow, depending on the preparations of so short a life. How little doth he know the worth of his Soul, the Joyes of Heaven, the terrors of Hell, the malicious diligence of Satan, or the difficulty of Salvation, that can idle and play away whole hours of time ; and pray as if he prayed not, and seem to be Religious when he is not in good earnest ! and bestirreth not himself so much to escape Hell fire, and to obtain everlasting Joyes with Christ, as he would do to escape a temporal death or misery, or to obtain some dignity or riches in the World, 1 Cor. 7. 29, 30. O therefore as ever you care what becometh of your Souls, and as ever you will have comfort in the review of your present life, make not a jest of Heaven and Hell : Trifle not in your race and warfare ; Dally not with God and Conscience ; Play not, and dream not away your Time. Know the worth of an hours Time, for the sake of your *work*, and of your Souls, as it is commonly known by dying men. But of this I have spoke already in my *NOW* or *NEVER*, and a *Saint* or a *Brute*, and in the third part of the *Saints Rest*.

DIRECT. XV.III.

Sit down and count what it may cost you to be Christians indeed, and to be saved: Reckon not on prosperity, or a cheap Religion, but resolve to take up the Cross and follow Christ in suffering, and to be Crucified to the World, and by many tribulations, to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Luke 14. 26, 27, 28, 30, 33. Gal. 6. 14. Acts 14. 22. 1 Thes. 3. 4. and 2 Thes. 1. 6, 7, 8. Mal. 5. 10, 11, 12. 2 Tim. 3. 12.

ALL that will live godly in Christ shall suffer Persecution. It is not *All that are Baptized and called Christians*, but *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus*: It is *Godliness*, and not the bare name of Christianity, which the Serpents Seed have so great an enmity to. I have elsewhere cited an excellent saying of Dr. Th. Jacksons, to prove that this is to be expected under *Christian*, as well as *Heathen Governments*, and that it is not through the goodness of the Great ones of the World, but the cowardliness of our hearts, that the Ministers of Christ are not ordinarily Martyrs. Though God may possibly exempt you from any notable suffering for his Cause, yet it is not wise or safe to expect such an exemption: For that will hinder your preparation for Suffering: And a mind prepared to suffer, is essential to true Christianity: And no man that is not a Martyr in Resolution and disposition can be saved.

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laved. If the fiery tryal come upon you, let it not seem a *strange unexpected thing*, 1 Pet. 4. 12, 13, 14, 17. When *Persecution ariseth because of the Word*, the unrooted, unsound, unsettled Christian is presently offended, and falls away, Mar. 13. 21. Mark 4. 17. Then they will fall to distinguishing and carnal reasoning, and prove any thing lawful which is necessary to their Peace, Gal. 6. 12. *As many as desire to make a fair shew in the Flesh, they constrain you to be Circumcised, only lest they should suffer Persecution for the Cross of Christ*, Gal. 6. 12. Shrink not for Sufferings; *Fear not them that can but kill the body*, Luke 12. 4. Never doth the Spirit of God and Glory so much rest upon Believers, as in their greatest Sufferings for Righteousness sake, 1 Pet. 4. 14. and never have they cause of more exceeding joy, Matth. 5. 11, 12. Prosperity doth not so well agree with a life of Faith, as Sufferings and Adversity. *Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory; while we look not at the (temporal) things which are seen, but at the things (eternal) which are not seen*, 2 Cor. 4. 17, 18. Read Rom. 8. 33. to the end.

DIRECT. XIX.

If you fall into any sin, rise speedily by a thorough Repentance; and take heed both of delay, and of a palliate Cure, Luke 13. 3, 5. and 22. 32.

TAKE heed of trusting to a *General Repentance* or a *Converted state*, instead of a *particular Repentance* and *Conversion* from any *known sin*, especially which is more than the ordinary unavoidable infirmities of a Saint. For it is not *General Repentance* indeed which reacheth not to every *known* particular. If temptation have cast you down, take heed of lying there, but presently get up again: What the Apostle saith of *Wrath*, Eph. 4. 26. the same I may say of other falls, *Let not the Sin go down upon them*: But go out with *Peter* and weep with him, if you have sinned with him: If your bones be out of joynt or broken, get them set presently, before they settle in their dislocation: And let the *Cure* be through, and spare not for a little pain at first: Let as *open confession* as the case requireth, and as *full restitution*, signify the sincerity of your *Repentance*: For a gentle handling of your selves may undo you; And palliation is the *Hypocrites* cure. O take heed lest you presume to sleep one night in your unrepented sin; and take heed lest *Delay* encourage the Tempter to offer you the bait again and again, and to say, *Why not once more; Why may you not be as well pardoned for twice as for once; and for thrice as for twice, &c.*
It's

It's dangerous playing or sleeping at the brink of Hell. Away from the temptation and occasion of your sin; stand not disputing, but *Resolve* and be gone; And *sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto you*, John 5. 14. Stick not man at the shame or loss or suffering, which confession, restitution or reformation may bring; but remember that you can never escape damnation at too dear a rate. This is Christs meaning, when he speaketh of *cutting off a Right hand*, or *plucking out a right eye*, if it offend; that is, ensnare and tempt you unto sin, *Matth. 5. 29, 30*. Not that you should do so indeed, for you have an easier way to avoid the sin; but that, this is far the *lesser of the two evils*, to lose a *hand or eye*, than to lose the Soul, and therefore to be chosen if there were no other remedy. If the thief had no other way to forbear stealing than to cut off his hand; or the Fornicator to cure his lust, than to put out his eyes, it were a cheap remedy. A cheap and easy superficial Repentance, may skin over the sore and deceive an Hypocrite; but he that would be sure of pardon, and free from fear, must go to the bottom.

DIRECT. XX.

Live as with Death continually in your eye, and spend every day in serious preparation for it, that when it cometh, you may find your work dispatcht; and may not then cry out in vain to God to try you once again.

PROMISE not your selves long life : Think not of death as at many years distance, but as hard at hand. Think what will then be needful to your peace and comfort, and order all your life accordingly, and prepare that *now*, which will be needful *then* : Live *now* while you have *time*, as you will resolve and promise God to live, when on your death-bed you are praying for a *little time of tryal more* : It is a great work to die in a joyful assurance and hope of everlasting life, and with a longing desire to depart and be with Christ as best of all, *Phil. 1. 21, 23*. O then what a burden and terror it will be, to have an *unbelieving*, or a *worldly* heart, or a *guilty Conscience*. Now therefore use all possible diligence to *strengthen Faith*, to *increase love*, to be acquit from *guilt*, to be above the *World*, to have the mind set free from the Captivity of the *flesh*, to walk with God, and to obtain the deepest, most delectable apprehensions of his love in Christ, and of the heavenly blessedness which you expect. Do you feel any doubts of the state of immortality, or staggering at the Promise of God through unbelief ! Presently do all you can to conquer them, and get a clear resolution

lution to your souls, and leave it not all to do at the time of sickness. Are the *thoughts* of God and Heaven unpleasant or terrible to you? Presently search out the cause of all, and labour in the cure of it as for your lives. Is there any former or present sin which is a burden or terror to your Consciences? Presently seek out to Christ for a Cure, by Faith and true Repentance; and do that to disburden your Consciences now, which you would do on a sick-bed; and leave not so great and necessary a work to so uncertain and short and unfit a time. Is there any thing in this World that is sweeter to your thoughts than God and Heaven? and which you cannot willingly let go. Mortifie it without delay; consider of its vanity; compare it with Heaven; Crucifie it by the Cross of Christ; cease not till you account it *loss and dung*, for the excellent knowledge of Christ and life eternal, *Phil. 3. 7, 8, 9.* Let not *death* surprize you as a thing that you never seriously expected: Can you do no more in preparation for it than you do? If not, why do you wish at death to be tryed once again? and why are you troubled that you lived no better? But if you can, when think you should it be done? Is the time of uncertain painful sickness better than this? O how doth sensuality besot the World! and inconsiderateness deprive them of the benefit of their reason? O Sirs, if you know indeed that you must shortly die, live then as dying men should live: Choose your condition in the World, and manage it as men that must shortly dye: Use your Power, and Command, and Honour, and use all your Neighbours, and especially use the Cause and Servants of Christ, as

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men should do that must shortly die. Build and
plant, and buy and sell, and use your Riches as
those that must die, remembring that the fashi-
on of all these things is passing away, 1 Cor. 7. 29,
30. Yea pray and read and hear and meditate as
those that must die. Seeing you are as sure of it
as if it were this hour; in the name of God delay
not your preparations. It is a terrible thing for
an immortal Soul to pass out of the body in a
carnal unregenerate, unprepared state: and to
leave a World which they loved and were fa-
miliar with, and go to a World which they nei-
ther know nor love, and where they have nei-
ther heart nor treasure, Matth. 6. 19, 20, 31. The
measure of Faith which may help you to bear an
easie cross, is not sufficient to fortifie and encou-
rage your souls, to enter upon so great a change.
So also bear all your wants and crosses as men
that must shortly die: Fear the cruelties of men,
but as becometh those that are ready to die: He
that can die well, can do any thing, or suffer any
thing: And he that is unready to die, is unfit for
a fruitful and comfortable life. What can ratio-
nally rejoyce that man, who is *sure to die*, and is
unready to dye, and is yet unfurnished of *dying*
comforts? Let nothing be now *sweet* to you,
which will be bitter to your *dying* thoughts. Let
nothing be much desired now, which will be un-
profitable and uncomfortable then. Let nothing
seem very heavy or grievous now, which will be
light and easy then: Let nothing now seem *ho-*
neurable, which will then seem *despicable* and
vile. Consider of every thing as it will look at
death; that when the day shall come which en-
deth all the joyes of the ungodly, you may look
up

up with joy, and say, *Welcome Heaven, This is the day which I so long expected, which all my dayes were spent in preparation for, which shall end my fears, and begin my felicity, and put me into possession of all that I desired and prayed and laboured for; when my Soul shall see its glorified Lord: For he hath said, John 12. 26. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: If any man serve me, him will my Father honour: Even so Lord Jesus, remember me now thou art in thy Kingdom, and let me be with thee in Paradise, Luke 23. 42, 43. O thou that spakest those words so full of unexpressible comfort to a sinful woman in the first speech after thy blessed Resurrection, Joh. 20. 17. GO TO MY BRETHREN, AND SAY UNTO THEM, I ASCEND UNTO MY FATHER AND YOUR FATHER, AND TO MY GOD AND YOUR GOD.] Take up now this Soul that is thine own, that it may see the Glory given thee with the Father, Joh. 17. 24. and instead of this life of temptation, trouble, darkness, distance, and sinful imperfection, I may delightfully Behold and Love and Praise, thy Father, and my Father, and thy God and my God. Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; Lord Jesus receive my Spirit, Luke 2. 29. Acts 7. 59.*

And now I have given you all these *Directions*, I shall only request you in the close, that you will set your very hearts to the daily serious practice of them; For there is no other way for a ripe confirmed state of Grace: And as ever you regard the glory of God, the honour of your Reli-

Religion, the welfare of the Church and those about you, and the *living* and *dying* comforts of your selves; O do not sluggishly rest in an Infant state of Grace! Did you but know how a *weak* and *strong* Faith differ, and how a *weak* and a *sound Confirmed Christian* differ, as to the honour of God, and the good of others, and especially to themselves, both in *life* and *death*, it would quickly awaken you to a cheerful diligence, for so high and excellent an end. Did you but well understand the wrong that Christ and the Gospel have sustained in the World, yea in *England*, by *weak, diseased, distempered* Christians, your hearts would bleed, and with shame and grief, it would be your secret and open lamentation. Stir up then the Grace that is given you, and use Christs means, and do your best, and you will find that Christ is not an insufficient Physician, nor an uneffectual Saviour, or an empty Fountain; but that he is filled with all the fulness of God, and hath Spirit and life to communicate to his Members, *Zeck. 12. 8.* and that there is no want which he cannot supply, and no corruption or temptation, which his Grace is not sufficient to overcome, *John 4. 14. 2 Cor. 12. 9. Rom. 6. 4, 6. Col. 3. 1, 3, 4.*

F I N I S.

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Directed to my worthy Friend,
*Henry Ashurst, Esquire, Citizen of
London.*

Dear and faithful Friend,



When this Book was
Printed and passing
into the World, with-
out the ordinary or-
nament of a prefixed
honoured Name, my
thoughts reduced me into the com-
mon way, though not upon the com-

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mon reasons; assuring me that your name, would be more than an accident or ceremony to such a discourse as this; even a part more substantial than a Map is in a Treatise of Geography, or the well-cut Figures in Tractates of Anatomy. Discourses of Navigation, Architecture, Musick, &c. may almost as hopefully instruct the Learners, without any visible operations or effects, as the Characters of well-tempered Christians, can duly inform the minds of ignorant ungodly men, of so Divine a thing as Christianity and Godliness, without acquaintance with some such *Persons*, in whom these Characters are manifestly exemplified. Wise and holy precepts, are to make wise and holy persons: It is such *Persons* as well as such *Precepts* which bear the image of God: which indeed is most perfect in exactness and integrity in the precepts; (for in them

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them is no imperfection or error, as they are of God;) But it is of greater *final Excellency*; in *activity* and *usefulness* as it is in men. And therefore as God delighteth in his *servants*, and is Glorified in and by *them* in the world; so Satan usually chooseth such *Persons*, to reproach and make odious to the ignorant, rather than the *holy Precepts* immediately, by which they are directed; both because their *Holiness* is most exasperating by *activity*; and also most lyable to calumny and contempt, through imperfection, and mixture of that which indeed is worthy of dislike. Till *Godliness* and *Christianity* be visible in full perfection, and elevated above the contradiction of folly, and the contempt of pride, the blind distracted minds of hardened forsaken sinners, will not acknowledge its divine celestial nature, and worth: But then it will be too late to become partakers.

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of it: They must both *know* and *possess* it in its *infancy* and *minority*, who will ever enjoy it in its heavenly dignity and glory. If seasonable illumination and conversion, confute not the deceits and standers which pride and ignorance have entertained, the too-late confutation of them by death and their following experience, will make them wish, that they had been wise at cheaper rates; when it will be in vain to cry, *Give us of your Oyle, for our Lamps are out*, Mat. 25. 8.

But while I offer your name to the malicious world, as an instance of the temper which I here describe, I intend it not as a *singular* though an *eminent* instance: For through the great mercy of God, there are thousands of examples of *confirmed* Christians, among us in this Land, even before those eyes which will not see them. But it is not Catalogues but *single* names, which Writers have used in
this

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this way. And why may I not take the advantage of Custome, to leave to the World the testimony of my estimation and great respects, to so deserving a person of the primitive Christian Catholick temper: And to let them know, what sort of men were my most dear and faithful friends? And also thus to express my love, by telling you closely *what you must be*, as well as by telling the World for their example, *what you are*. Upon these accounts, without your knowledge or consent, I presume thus to prefix your name, to this Treatise written long ago, but now published by

Your faithful Friend,

Rich. Baxter.

From my Lodging
in New-Prison,
June 14. 1669.

ERRATA.



ERRATA.

Reader, When I had gathered the *Errata* I was separated by a Prison from those Collections; and having but two of the Sheets now at hand, I shall give you the *Errata* of them only.

IN the Contents, n. 15. for *Lovers of God* read *Lovers of God*.
Pag. 163. l. 5. for *to fix r.* and *fix* pag. 163. l. 18. blot out
that. p. 164. l. 6. for *that r.* that. p. 169. l. 10. for *of*
r. for. p. 170. l. 1. for *ever* *ever*. All the rest I have forgotten,
save that somewhere I remember *fly* for *fly*.

To



TO THE READER.

Readers,



I is a matter of greater moment than I can express, what *Idea* or *Image* of the nature of **GODLINESS** and **CHRISTIANITY** is *imprinted upon mens minds:*

The description which is *expressed* in the *sacred Scriptures*, is true and full: The thing described is rational, pure, perfect, unblameable and amiable. That which is *expressed* in the *Lives* of the most, is nothing so; but is purblind, defiled, maimed, imperfect, culpable, and mixt with so much of the contrary quality, that to them that cannot distinguish the *Chaff* from the *Wheat*, the *Sickness* from the *Life*, it seemeth an *unreasonable, fancifull, loathsome* and *vexatious* thing; and so far from being worthy to be preferred before all the Riches, Honours and Pleasures of the world, that it seemeth worthy to be kept under as a troubler of

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Kingdoms, Societies and Souls. And doubtless this *monstrous* Expression of it in mens Lives, is because the *perfect* expression of it in Gods Word, hath not made a *true impression* upon the *Mind*, and consequently upon the *Heart*. For as it is *sound Doctrine* which must make *sound Christians*; so *Doctrine* worketh on the *will* and *affections* not as it is in *it self*, and as *delivered*, but as it is *understood*, *believed*, *remembered*, *considered*; even as it is *imprinted* on the *Mind*, and *used* by it. And as *interposed matter*, or *defective application*, may cause the Image on the Wax to be *imperfect*, though made by the most *perfect* Seal: so is it in this case; when one man doth *defectively understand* the Scripture-description of a godly man, or Christian; and another by misunderstanding mixeth *false conceptions* of his own; and another by a corrupt depraved will doth hinder the understanding from *believing*, or *remembering*, or *considering* and *using* what it partly apprehendeth; what wonder if the Godliness and Christianity in their hearts be unlike the Godliness and Christianity in the Scriptures: When the Law of God in *Nature* and *Scripture* is pure and uncorrupt, and the Law of God written imperfectly on the *heart*, is there mixt with the carnal Law in their members, no marvel if it

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it be *expressed* accordingly in their lives.

I have therefore much endeavoured in all my writings, and especially in this, to draw out the full *pourtraiture* of a *Christian* or *godly man indeed*, and to describe *Gods Image* on the soul of man, in such a manner as tendeth to the just information of the Readers mind, and the filling up of the wants, and rectifying the errors which may be found in his former conceptions of it. And I do purposely inculcate the same things oft, in several writings (as when I preached I did in all my Sermons) that the Reader may find that I bring him not undigested needless novelties, and that the frequent repetition of them may help to make the deeper and fuller impression: For my work is to subserve the Holy Ghost, in *putting Gods Law into mens hearts*, and *writing it out truly, clearly and fully upon their inward parts*; that they may be *made such* themselves, by understanding thoroughly what they *must be*, and what a *solid Christian* is: And that thus they may be born again by the *incorruptible, immortal seed*, the *Word of God* which will *live and abide for ever*; and may *purifie their souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit*, 1 Pet. 1. 22, 23, 25. He is the best Lawyer, Physician, Souldier, &c. who hath his *Doctrine* in his brain; and not only in his Books; and hath

A 3 digested

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digested his reading into an intellectual systeme and habit of knowledge. If Ministers had an hundred times over repeated the *integral pourtraiture* or *character* of a *sound Christian*, till it had been as familiar to the *minds* and *memories* of their hearers, as is the description of a Magistrate, a Physician, a School-master, a Husbandman, a Shepherd, and such things as they are well acquainted with, it would have been a powerfull means to make *sound Christians*. But when mens minds conceive of a *Christian*, as a man that differeth from Heathens and Infidels, in nothing but holding the *Christian Opinions*, and using different *words* and *ceremonies* of worship, and suchlike, no wonder if such be but opinionative lifeless Christians: And if their Religion *make them no better* than a *Seneca* or *Plutarch*, I shall never believe that they are any surer to be saved than they. And such a sort of men there are, that suppose Christianity to consist but of these three parts; 1. The *Christian Doctrine* acknowledged (which they call *Faith*.) 2. The *Orders* and *Ordinances* of the *Christian Church* and *Worship*, submitted to, and decently used (which they call *Godliness*.) And 3. The *heart* and *life* of a *Cato*, *Cicero*, or *Socrates* adjoyned: But all that goeth beyond this, (which is the *Life* of Christianity

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stianity and Godliness, a Lively Faith, and Hope, and Love, a Heavenly and Holy mind and life, from the renewing indwelling Spirit of God, which is described in this Treatise) they are strangers to it, and take it to be but fanisie and hypocritie. These *No-Christians* do much to reduce the Church to *Infidelity*; that there may be indeed *No Christians* in the world. For my part I must confess, if there were no better Christians in the world than these, I think I should be no Christian my self: And if Christ *made men no better* than the Religion of *Socrates, Cato or Seneca*, and did no more to the reparation and perfecting of mens hearts and lives, I should think no better of the *Christian Religion* than theirs: For the *means* is to be estimated by the *End* and *Use*: And that's the best Physician that hath the Remedies which are fittest to work the cure. If God had not acquainted me with a sort of men that have really more Holiness, Mortification, Spirituality, Love to God, and to one another, and even to enemies, and more heavenly desires, expectations and delights, than these men before described have, it would have been a very great hinderance to my Faith.

The same may I say of those that place Godliness and Christianity only in hold-

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ing strict opinions, and in affected need-
less singularities, and in the fluent Orato-
ry and length of prayer, and avoiding
other mens forms and modes of worship,
and in any thing short of a *Renewed, Holy,
Heavenly* heart and life.

And undoubtedly if a *true, full* Cha-
racter of *Godliness* had been imprinted in
their minds, we should never have seen
the Professors of it so blotted with sen-
suality, selfishness, pride, ambition, world-
liness, distrust of God, self-conceitedness,
heresie, schism, rebellions, inquietness,
impatieney, unmercifulness, and cruelty
to mens souls and bodies, as we have seen
them in this age; and all this justified as
consistent with Religion.

And I fear that because this Treatise
will speak to few that are not some way
guilty, every face which hath a spot or
blemish will be offended with the glass :
and lest the faulty will say that I parti-
cularly intended to disgrace them : But I
must here tell the Reader, to prevent his
misunderstanding, that if he shall imagine
that I have my eyes upon particular par-
ties, and as a discontented person do in-
tend to blame those that differ from my
self, or to grieve inferiours, or dishonour
and asperse superiours, they will mistake
me, and wrong themselves, and me, who
professedly

To the Reader.

professedly intend but the true Description of *sound Christians, diseased Christians, and seeming Christians.*

And for the *manner* of this writing, I am conscious it hath but little to commend it. The *matter* is that for which it is published. The Lord *Verulam* in his *Essayes* truly saith, that *much reading makes one full; much discourse doth make one ready, and much writing doth make a man exact.* Though I have had my part of all these means, yet being parted five years from my *Books*, and three years from my *Preaching*, the effects may decay; and you must expect neither Quotations or Oratory Testimonies or ornament of stile: But having not yet wholly ceased from *Writing*, I may own so much of the *exactness* as will allow me to intreat the Reader, not to use me as many have done; who by over-looking some *one word*, have made the sense another thing, and have made it a crime to be *exact in Writing*, because they cannot or will not be *exact in Reading*, or charitable or humane in interpreting.

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THE
CHARACTER
OF

- 1 *A Sound Confirmed Christian,*
- 2 *And of the Weak Christian,*
- 3 *And of the Seeming Christian.*



IN the Explication of the Text, which I made the ground of the foregoing discourse, I have shewed you that there is a Degree of Grace to be expected and sought after by all true Christians, which putteth the Soul into a *sound, confirmed, radicated* state, in comparison of that *weak, diseased, tottering* condition, which most Christians now continue in. And I have shewed you how desireable a state that is, and what calamities follow the languishing unhealthfull state even of such as may be saved. And indeed did we but rightly understand, how deeply the errors and sins
B of

of many well-meaning Christians, have wounded the interest of Religion in this age; and how heynously they have dishonoured God, and caused the enemies of holyness to blaspheme, and hardened thousands in Popery and Ungodliness, in probability to their perdition: Had we well observed when Gods Judgements have begun, and understood what sins have caused our Warres, and Plagues and Flames, and worse than all these, our great heart-divisions, and Church-distractions and convulsions; we should ere this have given over the flattering of our selves and one another, in such a Heaven-provoking state; and the ostentation of that little goodness, which hath been eclipsed by such lamentable evils. And instead of these, we should have betaken our selves to the exercise of such a serious deep Repentance as the quality of our sins, and the greatness of Gods Chastisements do require. It is a dolefull case to see how light many make of all the rest of their distempers, when once they think that they have so much Grace and Mortification, as is absolutely necessary to save their souls: And expect that Preachers should say little to weak Christians, but words of comfort, setting forth their happiness: And yet if one of them, when he hath the Gout, or Stone, or Collick, or Dropsie, doth send for a Physitian, he would think himself derided or abused, if his Physitian instead of curing his disease, should only *comfort* him by telling him that he is not dead. What excellent disputations have Cicero and Seneca, the Platonists and Stoicks, to prove that *Virtue is of it self sufficient to make Man happy*? And yet many Christians live as if *Holiness* were but the *way* and *means* to their felicity, or

at

at best but a *small part* of their felicity it self; or as if felicity it self grew burdensome, or were not desirable in this life; or a small degree of it were as good as a greater.

And too many mistake the will of God, and the nature of Sanctification, and place their Religion in the hot prosecution of those mistakes: They make a composition of *error* and *passion*, and an *unyielding stiffness* in them, and *siding with the Church or party* which maintaineth them, and an *uncharitable censuring* those that are against them, and an *unpeaceable contending* for them; And this composition they mistake for Godliness, especially if there be but a few drams of Godliness and Truth in the composition, though corrupted and over-powered by the rest.

For these miscarriages of many well-meaning zealous persons, the Land mourneth, the Churches groan; Kingdoms are disturbed by them; Families are disquieted by them; Godliness is hindered, and much dishonoured by them; the Wicked are hardened by them, and encouraged to hate and blaspheme and oppose Religion; the glory of the Christian Faith is obscured by them; and the Infidel, Mahometan and Heathen World, are kept from Faith in Jesus Christ, and many millions of Souls destroyed by them. I mean, by the miscarriages of the weaker sort of Christians, and by the wicked lives of those carnal Hypocrites, who for custome or worldly interest do profess that Christianity which was never received by their hearts.

And all this is much promoted by their indiscretion, who are so intent upon the consolatory opening of the safety and happiness of Believers,

that they omit the due explication of their Description, their Dangers and their Duties.

One part of this too much neglected work I have endeavoured to perform in the foregoing Treatise; Another I shall attempt in this second Part: There are five Degrees or ranks of true Christians, observable: 1. The *Weakest* Christians, who have only the Essentials of Christianity, or very little more: As Infants that are alive, but of little strength or use to others. 2. Those that are *lapsed* into some wounding sin, though not into a state of damnation; Like men at age, who have lost the use of some one member, for the present, though they are strong in other parts. 3. Those that having the *Integral parts* of Christianity in a considerable measure, are in a *sound and healthfull state*; though neither *perfect*, nor of the highest form or rank of Christians in this life, nor without such infirmities, as are the matter of their daily *Watchfulness* and *Humiliation*. 4. Those that are so strong as to attain extraordinary degrees of grace, who are therefore comparatively called *Perfect*, as *Mat. 5. 45*. 5. Those that have an *absolute Perfection* without sin, that is, The Heavenly Inhabitants.

Among all these, it is the *third* sort or degree, which I have here characterized, and upon *the by*, the *first* sort and the *Hypocrite*. I meddle not now with the Lapsed Christian as such, nor with those Giants in holiness of extraordinary strength, nor with the perfect blessed Souls in Heaven: But, it is the Christian who hath attained that confirmation in grace, and composed, quiet, fruitfull state, which we might ordinarily expect, if we were industrious, whose Image or Character

I shall now present you with: I call him oft-times *A Christian indeed*, in allusion to Christs description of *Nathaniel*, *Joh. 1. 47.* and as we commonly use that word, for one that answereth his own profession without any notable dishonour or defect: As we say, such a man is a *Scholar indeed*; and not as signifying his meer sincerity. I mean one whose heart and life is so conform to the Principles, the Rule and the Hopes of Christianity, that to the Honour of Christ, the true Nature of our Religion is discernible in his conversation, *Mat. 5. 16.* In whom an impartial Infidel might perceive the true nature of the Christian Faith and Godliness. If the World were fuller of such living Images of Christ, who like true Regenerate Children represent their Heavenly Father, Christianity would not have met with so much prejudice, nor had so many enemies in the World, nor would so many millions have been kept in the darkness of Heathenism and Infidelity, by flying from Christians, as a sort of people that are *common and unclean*.

Among Christians, there are *Babes*, that must be fed with *milk*, and not with *strong meat*, that are *unskilfull in the word of righteousness*; *1 Joh. 2. 2. 12, 13, 14. Heb. 5. 12, 13, 14.* and *Novices*, who are unsettled, and in danger of an overthrow, *1 Tim. 3. 6. Joh. 15. 3, 5, &c.* In these the nature and excellency of Christianity, is little more apparent, than *Reason* in a little childe. And there are *strong, confirmed Christians*, who by *reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil*, *Heb. 5. 13, 14.* and who shew forth the glory of him that hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light: of whom

God himself may say to Satan and their malicious enemies, as once of *Job*, *Hast thou not seen my servant Job*, &c. This *Christian* indeed I shall now describe to you, both to confute the Infidels slanders of Christianity, and to unteach men those *false descriptions* which have caused the presumption of the profane, and the irregularities of erroneous Sectaries; and to tell you what manner of persons they be, that God is honoured by; and what you must be if you will well understand your own Religion. Be *Christians* indeed, and you will have the *Comforts* indeed of Christianity; and will finde that its *Fruits* and *Joyes* are not *dreams* and *shadows* and *imaginations*, if you content not your selves with an *imagination*, *dream* and *shadow* of Christianity, or with some clouded spark or buried seed.

The Characters.

I. **A** CHRISTIAN INDEED, (by which I still mean, a *sound confirmed Christian*) is one that contenteth not himself to have a *seed* or *Habit* of Faith, but he *Liveth* by Faith, as the *Sensualist* liveth by sight or sense: Not putting out the eye of sense, nor living as if he had no Body, nor lived not in a world of sensible Objects; But as he is a Reasonable creature; which exalterh him above the sensitive Nature, so Faith is the true information of his Reason, about those high and excellent things, which must take him up above things sensible. He hath so firm a *Belief* of the Life to come, as procured by Christ, and promised in the Gospel, as that it serveth him

him for the Government of his Soul, as his bodily sight doth for the conduct of his Body. I say not, that he is assaulted with no temptations, nor that his Faith is perfect in degree, nor that believing moveth him as passionately as sight or sense would do: But it doth *effectually* move him through the course and tenour of his life, to *do those things for the life to come*, which he would do if he saw the Glory of Heaven; and to *shun* those things for the avoiding of damnation, which he would shun, if he saw the flames of Hell. Whether he do these things so *servently* or not, his Belief is *powerfull, effectual and victorious*. Let sight and sense invite him to their Objects, and entice him to sin, and forsake his God, the objects of Faith shall prevail against them, in the bent of an even, a constant and resolved life. It is things *unseen* which he taketh for his *treasure*, and which have his *heart and hope*, and *chiefest labours*. All things else which he hath to do, are but subservient to his *Faith* and *Heavenly* interest, as his sensitive faculties are ruled by his Reason. His *Faith* is not only his *Opinion*, which teacheth him to choose what *Church* or *Party* he will be of; but it is his *Intellectual Light*; by which he *liveth*, and in the confidence and comfort of which he dyeth, 2 Cor. 5. 7, 8, 9. *For we walk by faith, not by sight — We groan to be cloathed upon with our heavenly house — Wherefore we labour that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him.* Heb. 10. 3. *Now the just shall live by faith —* Heb. 11. 1. *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* Most of the examples in Heb. 11. do shew you this truth, that true Christians live and govern their actions, by the firm Belief of the promise of

God, and of another Life when this is ended. v. 7. By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark; to the saving of his house; by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. V. 10. Abraham looked for a City which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Moses feared not the wrath of the King: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible, v. 27. So the three witnesses, Dan. 3. and Daniel himself, ch. 6. And all Believers have lived this life, as Abraham the Father of the faithfull did; who, as it is said of him, Rom. 4. 20. Staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God. The Faith of a Christian is truly Divine; and he knoweth that Gods truth is as certain as sight it self can be; however sight be apter to move the passions: Therefore, if you can judge but what a Rational man would be, if he saw Heaven and Hell, and all that God had appointed us to Believe, then you may conjecture what a confirmed Christian is; (though sense do cause more sensible apprehensions.)

2. The weak Christian also hath a faith, that is Divine, as caused by God, and resting on his word and truth. And he so far liveth by this Faith, as that it commandeth and guideth the scope and drift of his heart and life: But he believeth with a great deal of staggering and unbelief: And therefore his Hopes are interrupted by his troublesom doubts and fears; and the dimness and languor of his Faith is seen in the faintness of his desires, and the many blemishes of his Heart and Life: And sight and sensual objects are so much the more powerfull with him, by how much the light and life of faith is dark and weak.

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3. The Hypocrite or best of the unregenerate, believeth but either with a *Humane faith*, which resteth but on the Word of *Man*, or else with a *dead opinionative faith*, which is overpowered by *infidelity*, or is like the *dreaming* thoughts of a man asleep, which stirre him not to action: He *liveth by sight* and not by *faith*: For he hath not a Faith that will overpower Sense, and sensual objects, *Jam. 2. 14. Mat. 13. 22.*

II. 1. *A Christian indeed not only knoweth why* he is a Christian, but seeth *those Reasons* for his Religion, which disgrace all that the cunningest Atheist or Infidel can say against it: and so far satisfie, confirm and establish him, that emergent difficulties, temptations and objections, do not at all stagger him, or raise any deliberate doubts in him of the truth of the Word of God: He seeth *first the naturall evidence* of those *foundation-truths* which *Nature* it self maketh known: (as that there is a God of infinite Being, Power, Wisdom and Goodness, the Creator, the Owner, the Ruler, and the Father, Felicity and End of man; that we owe him all our love and service; that none of our fidelity shall be in vain or untewarded, and none shall be finally a loser by his duty; that man who is naturally governed by the hopes and fears of another life, is made and liveth for that other Life, where his Soul shall be sentenced by God his Judge to happiness or misery, &c.) And then he discerneth the *attestation of God* to those *supernatural*, superadded Revelations of the Gospel, containing the Doctrine of mans Redemption: And he seeth how wonderfully *these* are built upon the former, and how excellently the *Creators* and *Redeemers Doctrine* and Lawes agree; and how much

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countenance *supernatural* truths receive from the *presupposed naturals*: so that he doth not adhere to Christ and Religion by the meer engagement of education, friends or worldly advantages; nor by a *blind resolution*, which wanteth nothing but a strong temptation (from a Deceiver or a worldly Interest) to shake or overthrow it: But he is built upon the Rock, which will stand in the assault of Satans storms, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. *Mat. 16. 18. & 13. 23, & 7. 25. Joh. 6. 68, 69.*

2. But a *weak Christian* hath but a dim and general kind of knowledge of the reasons of his Religion; or at least but a *weak apprehension* of them, though he have the best and most unanswerable reasons: And either he is confident in the dark upon grounds which he cannot make good, and which want but a strong assault to shake them; or else he is troubled and ready to stagger at every difficulty which occurreth: Every *hard saying* in the Scripture doth offend him: And every seeming contradiction shaketh him: And the depth of myteries which pass his understanding, do make him say as *Nicodemus* of Regeneration, *How can these things be?* And if he meet with the objections of a cunning Infidel, he is unable so to defend the truth, and clear his way through them, as to come off unwounded and unshaken, and to be the more confirmed in the truth of his belief, by discerning the vanity of all that is said against it. *Heb. 5. 12, 13. Matth. 15. 16. 1 Cor. 14. 20. Joh. 12. 16.*

3. The *seeming Christian* either hath no solid Reasons at all for his Religion, or else if he have the best, he hath no sound apprehension of them:

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But though he be never so learned and orthodox, and can preach and defend the Faith, it is not so rooted in him as to endure the tryall; but if a strong temptation from *subtily* or *carnal interest* assault him, you shall see that he was built upon the sand, and that there was in him a secret root of bitterness, and an evil heart of unbelief, which causeth him to depart from the living God, Heb. 3. 12. Matth. 13. 20, 21, 22. Matth. 7. 26, 27. Heb. 12. 15. Job. 6. 60, 64, 66. 1 Tim. 6. 10, 11.

III. 1. A Christian indeed, is not only confirmed in the *essentials* of Christianity, but he hath a *clear delightfull sight* of those *usefull truths*, which are the *Integrals* of Christianity, and are built-upon the *fundamentals*, and are the *branches* of the *master-points* of Faith. Though he see not all the *lesser Truths* (which are branched out at last into innumerable particles) yet he seeth the *main body* of sacred Verities, delivered by Christ for mans *sanctification*; and seeth them *methodically* in their proper places; and seeth how one supports another, and in how beautifull an order and contexture they are placed: And as he sticketh not in the *bare Principles*, so he receiveth all these *additions* of knowledge, not *notionally* only, but *practically*, as the food on which his Soul must live. Heb. 5. 13, 14. & 6. 1, 2, &c. Matth. 13. 11. Eph. 1. 18. & 3. 18, 19. Job. 13. 17.

2. A *weak Christian* (in knowledge) besides the *Principles* or *Essentials* of Religion, doth know but a few *disordered scattered Truths*; which are also but *half known*, because while he hath some knowledge of those points, he is ignorant of many other, which are needfull to the supporting,
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and clearing, and improving of them: And because he knoweth them not in their places, and order, and relation, and aspect upon other Truths. And therefore if Temptations be strong, and come with advantage, the weak Christian in such points is easily drawn into many errors; and thence into great confidence and conceitedness in those Errors; and thence into sinfull dangerous courses in the prosecution and practice of those Errors: Such are like *children tost up and down, and carryed to and fro by every winde of doctrine, through the cunning sleight and subtilty of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive*, Eph. 4. 14. 2 Cor. 11. 3. Col. 2. 4. 2 Tim. 3. 7.

3. The *seeming Christian* having no saving practical knowledge of the *Essentials* of Christianity themselves, doth therefore either neglect to know the rest, or knoweth them but notionally, as common Sciences, and subjecteth them all to his *Worldly interest*: And therefore is still of that side or party in Religion, which upon the account of safety, honour or preferment, his flesh commandeth him to follow. Either he is still on the greater, rising side, and of the Rulers Religion, be it what it will; or if he dissent, it is in pursuit of another game, which Pride or fleshly ends have started. 2 Pet. 2. 14. Gal. 3. 3. Job. 9. 22. & 12. 42, 43. Matth. 13. 21, 22.

IV. 1. The *Christian indeed*, hath not only Reason for his Religion, but also hath an *inward con-natural principle*, even the *spirit of Christ*, which is as a *New-nature*, inclining and enlivening him to a holy life: whereby he *mindeth* and *savoureth* the things of the Spirit: Not that his Nature doth work *blindly*, as Nature doth in the irrational creatures;

tures; but at least it much *imitateth* Nature as it is found in *Rational* creatures, where the *Inclination* is necessary, but the *Operations* free, and subject to Reason: It is a *spiritual appetite* in the *Rational* appetite, even the *will*, and a *spiritual visive disposition* in the understanding: Not a *faculty* in a *faculty*; but the *right disposition* of the faculties to their highest objects, to which they are by corruption made unsuitable. So that it is neither a proper power in the *Natural* sense, nor a *meer act*, but nearest to the nature of a *seminal disposition* or *habit*. It is the *beast* and *rectitude* of the faculties of the Soul. Even as Nature hath made the *understanding* disposed to *Truth* in generall, and the *will* disposed or inclined to *Good* in generall, and to *self-preservation* and *felicity* in particular; so the Spirit of Christ doth *dispose* the understanding to spiritual truth, to know God and the matters of salvation, and doth *incline* the *will* to God and *Holiness*; not *blindly*, as they are *unknown*; but to love and serve a *known* God. So that whether this be *properly* or only *analogically* called *A Nature*, or rather should be called a *Habit*, I determine not; but certainly it is a fixed *Disposition* and *Inclination*, which Scripture calleth the *Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. and [the seed of God abiding in us, 1 Joh. 3. 9. But most usually it is called [the Spirit of God, or of Christ in us: Rom. 8. 9. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ the same is none of his. 1 Cor. 12. 13. By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, — Therefore we are said to be in the Spirit, and walk after the Spirit, and by the Spirit to mortifie the deeds of the Body, Rom. 8. 1. 9, 13. And it is called, the Spirit of the Son, and the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father;

or are inclined to God, as Children to their Father; and the *Spirit of grace and supplication*, Rom. 8. 15, 23, 26. Gal. 4. 6. & 5. 17, 18. Eph. 2. 18, 22. & 4. 3, 4. Phil. 1. 27. & 2. 1. Zech. 12. 10. From this *Spirit* and the fruits of it, we are called *New Creatures*, and *quickened* and *made alive* to God, 2 Cor. 5. 17. Eph. 2. 15. Rom. 6. 11, 13. It is a great controversy, whether this Holy disposition and inclination, was *Natural* to *Adam* or not, and consequently, whether it be a *restored nature* in us, or not? It was so *natural* to him, as *Health* is natural to the body, but not so *natural* as to be a *Necessitating Principle*, nor so as to be inseparable and unlosable.

2. This same *Spirit* and holy inclination is in the *weakest Christian* also, but in a small degree, and remissly operating, so as that the *fleshly inclination* oft seemeth to be the stronger, when he judgeth by its *passionate struglings* within him: Though indeed the *Spirit of life* doth not only strive, but conquer in the main, even in the *weakest Christians*, Rom. 8, 9. Gal. 5. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

3. The *seeming Christian* hath only the *unefectual motions* of the *Spirit* to a *Holy Life*, and *effectual motions*, and inward dispositions to some *common duties* of Religion: And from these with the *natural principles* of *self-love* and *common honesty*, with the outward *perswasions* of company and advantages, his Religion is maintained, without the *Regeneration* of the *Spirit*, Job. 3. 6.

V. From hence it followeth, 1. That a *Christian* indeed doth not serve God for *fear* only, but for *love*; even for *love* both of *himself*, and of his *holy work* and *service*: Yea, the *strong Christians* Love

to God and Holiness, is not only greater than his Love to Creatures, but greater than his fear of wrath and punishment. The Love of God constraineth him to duty, 2 Cor. 5. 14. *Love is the fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. 13. 10. therefore the Gospel cannot be obeyed without it. He saith not, O that this were no duty, and O that this forbidden thing were lawfull, (Though his Flesh say so, the Spirit which is the predominant part doth not) But he saith, *O how I love thy Law! O that my wayes were so directed that I might keep thy statutes!* Psal. 119. 5. For the *spirit is willing* even when the *flesh is weak*: He serveth not God against his will; but his *will* is to serve him more and better than he doth: He longeth to be perfect, and perfectly to do the will of God, and taketh the remnant of his sinfull infirmities to be a kind of bondage to him, which he groaneth to be delivered from: To will even perfection is *present with him*, though not perfectly; and though he do not all that he willeth: And this is the true meaning of Pauls complaints, Rom. 7. Because the flesh warreth against the Spirit, he cannot do the good that he would, that is, he cannot be perfect, for so he would be, Gal. 5. 17. His love and will excels his practice.

2. The weak Christian also hath more love to God and holiness than to the world and fleshly pleasure: But yet his fear of punishment is greater than his Love to God and Holiness. To have no Love to God is inconsistent with a state of Grace, and so it is to have less love to God than to the world, and less love to holiness than to sin: But to have more Fear than Love is consistent with sincerity of Grace: Yea, the weak Christians love

to God and Holiness is joyed with so much backwardness and averfness, and interrupted with weariness, and with the carnall allurements and diversions of the Creature, that he cannot certainly perceive whether his love and willingness be sincere or not: He goeth on in a course of duty, but so heavily, that he scarce knoweth, whether his love or loathing of it be the greater. He goeth to it as a sick man to his meat, or labour: All that he doth is with so much pain or undisposedness, that to his *feeling* his *aversness* seemeth greater than his *willingness*, were it not that *necessity* maketh him *willing*. For the habitual love and complacency which he hath towards God and Duty, is so oppressed by *fear*, and by *aversness*, that it is not so much felt in *act* as they.

3. A *seeming Christian* hath no true Love of God and Holiness at all, but some *uneffectual liking* and *wishes* which are overborn by a greater *backwardness*, and by a greater love to earthly things; so that *Fear* alone, without any true effectual Love, is the spring and principle of his Religion and obedience. God hath not his heart, when he draweth near him with his lips: He doth more than he *would* do, if he were not forced by *Necessity* and *Fear*; and had rather be excused, and lead another kind of life. *Mat. 15. 8. Isa. 29. 13.* Though *Necessity* and *fear* are very helpfull to the most sincere, yet *Fear* alone without *Love* or *Willingness* is a graceless state.

V I. 1. A *Christian* indeed doth love God in these three gradations: He loveth him *much* for his *mercy* to *himself*, and for that *Goodness* which consisteth in *benignity* to *himself*; But he loveth him

him more for his *Mercy to the Church*, and for that Goodness which consisteth in his Benignity to the Church. But he *Loveth him most of all* for his *Infinite perfections and essential excellencies*; His *Infinite Power, and Wisdom and Goodness* simply in himself considered. For he knoweth that *Love to himself* obligeth him to returns of Love: especially differencing saving grace. And he knoweth that the souls of *millions* are more worth incomparably then his own, and that God may be much more honoured by them than by him alone: And therefore he knoweth that the mercy to many is greater mercy, and a greater demonstration of the goodness of God; and therefore doth render him more amiable to man. *Rom. 9. 3.* And yet he knoweth that the Essential perfection and goodness of God as simply in himself and for himself, is *much more* amiable than his Benignity to the creature: And that he that is the *first efficiens* must needs be the *ultimate final cause* of all things: And that God is not finally for the creature, but the creature for God, (for all that he needeth it not) *For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things.* *Rom. 11. 36.* And as he is *Ininitely better than our selves*, so he is to be *better Loved* than our selves: As I love a *wife and vertuous* person, though he be one I never expect to receive any thing from, and therefore Love him for his *own sake*, and not for his benignity or usefulness to me: So must I love God most for his *essential perfections*, though his *benignity* also doth represent him amiable. *As* he is blindly selfish that would not rather himself be annihilated or perish, than whole Kingdoms should all perish, or the Sun be taken out of the world; (because that which is *best*

must be loved *as best*, and therefore be *best loved*:) so is he more blind who in his estimative complacential Love, preferreth not *Infinite Eternal Goodness*, before such an imperfect silly creature as himself (or all the world) : We are commanded to love our *Neighbour as our selves*, when God is to be loved *with all the heart and soul and might*, which therefore signifieth more than to love him *as our selves*; (or else he were to be loved no more than *our Neighbour*.) So that the strong Christian loveth God so much above himself, as that he accounteth himself and all his interests, as nothing in comparison of God, yea and *loveth himself* more for God than for himself: Though his *own salvation* be loved and desired by him, and God must be loved for his *mercy and benignity*; yet that *salvation* it self which he desireth, is nothing else but the *love of God*: Wherein his love is the *final felicitating act*, and God is the *final felicitating object*, and the *felicity of loving* is not first desired, but the *attractive object* doth draw out our love, and thereby make us *consequentially happy* in the injoying exercise thereof. Thus God is All and in all to the soul. *Psal.* 73. 25. *Rom.* 11. 36. *1 Cor.* 10. 31. *Deut.* 6. 5. *Mat.* 23. 37. *Mat.* 19. 17.

2. A *weak Christian* also loveth God as one that is infinitely better than himself and all things: (or else he did not love him at all *as God*.) But in the exercise he is so much in the minding of himself, and so seldom and weak in the contemplation of Gods perfections, that he *feeleth more* of his love to himself, than unto God: and *feeleth more* of his love to God as for the *Benefits* which he receiveth in and by himself, than as for his *own perfections*: yea and often *feeleth the love of himself*

himself to work more strongly than his Love to the Church, and all else in the world. The care of his own salvation is the highest principle which he ordinarily perceiveth in any great strength in him; and he is very little and weakly carried out to the Love of the whole Church, and to the Love of God above himself. *Phil. 2. 20, 21, 22. 1 Cor. 10. 24. Jer. 45. 5.*

3. A *seeming Christian* hath a common Love of God as he is Good, both in himself, and unto the world, and unto him. But this is not for his Holiness; and it is but a general uneffectual approbation and praise of God, which followeth a dead uneffectual belief: But his chiefest predominant Love is always to his Carnal self, and the Love both of his soul, and of God is subjected to his *fleshy self-love*. His chiefest Love to God is for prospering him in the world, and such as is subservient to his sensuality, pride, covetousness, presumption and false hopes. *Luke 18. 21, 22. 1 Joh. 2. 15. 2 Tim. 3. 2, 4. Job. 12. 43. Job. 5. 42.*

V I I. 1. A *Christian indeed* doth practically take this Love of God and the holy expressions of it, to be the very life and top of his Religion, and the very life and beauty and pleasure of his soul; He makes it his work in the world, and loveth himself (complacentially) but so far as he findeth in himself the Love of God; And so far as he findeth himself without it, he loatheth himself as an unlovely carcass: And so far as his prayers and obedience are without it, he looks on them but as unacceptable loathsome things. And therefore he is taken up in the study of Redemption, because he can no where so clearly see the Love and Loveliness of God, as in the face of a Redeemer, even in the

wonders of Love revealed in Christ. And he studieth them, that Love may kindle Love. And therefore he delighteth in the contemplating of Gods attributes and infinite perfections; and in the beholding of him in the frame of the Creation, and reading his name in the book of his works, that his soul may by such steps, be raised in Love and Admiration of his Maker: And as it is a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold the sun or light, so is it to the mind of the *Christian* indeed to be frequently and seriously contemplating the nature and glory of God: And the exercise of Love in such contemplations, is most of his daily walk with God. And therefore it is also, that he is more taken up in the exercises of thanksgiving and the Praises of the Almighty, than in the lower parts of Godliness: so that though he neglect not confession of sin and *humiliation*; yet doth he use them but in subserviency to the Love and Praise of God: He doth but rid out the filth that is undecent in a Heart that is to entertain its God. He placeth not the chief part of his Religion in any outward duties, nor in any lower preparatory acts; Nor doth he stop in any of these, however he neglect them not. But he useth them all, to advance his soul in the Love of God: And useth them the more diligently, because the Love of God to which they conduce, as to their proper end, is so high and excellent a work. Therefore in *Dauids* Psalms you find a heart delighting it self in the praises of God; and in Love with his word and works in order to his praises. *Psal.* 116. 1. &c. *Psal.* 106. & 103. & 145. & 146. &c. *Rom.* 8. 37.

2. The weak *Christian* is taken up but very little,

little, with the lively exercises of Love and Praise; nor with any Studies higher than his own distempered heart: The care of his poor soul, and the complaining of his manifold infirmities, and corruptions, is the most of his Religion: And if he set himself to the Praising of God or to Thanksgiving, he is as dull and short in it as if it were not his proper work. *Psal. 77.*

Mar. 9. 24. & 16. 14.

3. The *seeming Christian* liveth to the flesh; and carnal self-love is the active principle of his life: and he is neither exercised in *Humiliation* or in *Praise* sincerely; being unacquainted both with *holy Joy* and *Sorrow*; But knowing that he is in the hands of God, to prosper or destroy him, he will humble himself to him to escape his judgements, and praise him with some gladness for the sunshine of prosperity; and he will seem to be piously thanking God when he is but rejoicing in the accommodations of his flesh, or strengthening his presumption and false hopes of heaven. *Luke 18. 11. & 12. 19. Isa. 58. 2.*

VIII. 1. A *Christian* indeed is one that is so apprehensive of his lost condition, unworthyness and utter insufficiency for himself, and of the office, perfection and sufficiency of *Christ*, that he hath absolutely put his soul and all his hopes into the hands of Christ; and now liveth in him and upon him; as having no Life but what he hath from Christ, nor any other way of access to God, or acceptance of his person or his service but by him: In him he beholdeth and delightfully admireth the Love and goodness of the Father: In him he hath access with boldness unto God: Through him the most terrible avenging Judge is become a Reconciled God, and he that we could

not remember but with trembling, is become the most desirable object of our thoughts. He is delightfully employed in prying into the unsearchable myserie; And Christ doth even dwell in his heart by faith: and being rooted and grounded in love, he apprehendeth with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and knoweth the love of Christ which passeth knowledge: Eph. 3. 17, 18, 19. He perceiveth that he is daily beholden to Christ, that he is not in hell, that sin doth not make him like to Devills, and that he is not utterly forsaken of God: He feeleth that he is beholden to Christ, for every hours time, and every mercy to his soul or body, and for all his hope of mercy in this life or in the life to come. He perceiveth that he is dead in himself, and that his life is hid with Christ in God. And therefore he is as buried and risen again with Christ; even dead to sin, but alive to God through Jesus Christ. Rom. 6. 3, 4, 11. Col. 4. 4. He saith with Paul, Gal. 2. 20. *I am crucified with Christ: Nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.* Thus doth he live as truly and constantly by the second Adam who is a quickning spirit, as he doth by the first Adam who was a living soul. 1 Cor. 15. 45. This is a confirmed Christians life.

2. But the weak Christian, though he be also united unto Christ, and live by faith, yet how languid are the operations of that faith? How dark and dull are his thoughts of Christ? How little is his sense of the wonders of Gods love revealed to the world in the myserie of Redemption? How little use doth he make of Christ?

And

And how little life receives he from him? And how little comfort findeth he in believing, in comparison of that which the confirmed find? He is to Christ as a sick person to his food: He only picketh here and there a little of the crumbs of the bread of life, to keep him from dying; but is wofully unacquainted with the powerfullest works of faith. He is such a Believer as is next to an unbeliever, and such a member of Christ, as is next to a meer stranger.

3. And for the *seeming Christian*, he may understand the letter of the Gospel, and number himself with Christs disciples, and be baptized with water, and have such a faith as is a dead opinion: But he hath not an effectual living faith, nor is baptized with the Holy Ghost, nor is his soul engaged absolutely and entirely in the covenant of Christianity to his Redeemer: He may have a handsome well-made image of Christianity, but it is the flesh and sense, and not Christ and faith, by which his life is actuated and ordered. *Joh. 3.6. Rom. 2.28.*

I X. 1. *A Christian indeed* doth firmly believe that Christ is a *Teacher sent from God* (*Joh. 3.2.*) and that he came from Heaven to reveal his Fathers will, and to bring life and immortality more fully to light by his Gospel; and that if an Angel had been sent to tell us, of the life to come and the way thereto, he had not been so credible and venerable a messenger as the Son of God: And therefore he taketh him alone for his chief Teacher, and knoweth no Master on Earth but him, and such as he appointeth under him: His study in the world is to know a crucified and glorified Christ, and God by him, and he regardeth no other know-

ledge, nor useth any other studies, but this, and such as are subservient to this. Even when he studieth the *works of nature*, it is as by the conduct of the restorer of nature, and as one help appointed him by Christ, to lead him up to the knowledge of God. And therefore he perceiveth that *Christ is made of God unto us*, wisdom as well as *Righteousness*: And that Christianity is the true Philosophy: and that the *wisdom of the world*, which is only about worldly things, from worldly principles, to a worldly end, is foolishness with God: He taketh nothing for *wisdom* which tendeth not to acquaint him more with God, or lead him up to everlasting happiness. *Christ* is his *Teacher* (either by *natural* or *supernatural* revelation,) and *God* is his *ultimate end*, in all his studies; and all that he desireth to know in the world. He valueth *knowledge* according to its *usefulness*: And he knoweth that its chief use is to lead us to the love of God. *Matth. 23. 8. 1 Cor. 1. 30. & 2. 2. &c. Joh. 1. 18. Col. 2. 3. Eph. 4. 13.*

2. Though the *weak Christian* hath the same Master, yet alas how little doth he learn? and how oft is he hearkning to the teaching of the flesh? and how carnal, and common is much of his knowledge? How little doth he depend on Christ in his enquiries after the things of nature? And how apt is he to think almost as highly of the teaching of *Aristotle*, *Plato*, *Seneca*, or at least of some excellent preacher, as of Christ? and to forget that these are but his messengers and instruments, to convey unto us several parcels of that Truth, which is *his* and not *theirs*, and which (*naturally* or *supernaturally*) they received

ceived from him ; and all these Candles were lighted by him who is the Sun ? And how little doth this weak Christian refer his common knowledge to God ? or use it for him ? or to the furtherance of his own and others happiness ?

1 Tim. 2. 4.

3. And the *seeming Christian* though materially he may be eminent for knowledge, yet is so far from resigning himself to the teachings of Christ, that he maketh even his knowledge of Christian Verities to be to him but a common carnal thing, while he knoweth it but in a common manner, and useth it to the service of the flesh, and never yet learned so much as to be a new creature, nor to love God as God above the world. *1 Cor. 13. 2.*

X. 1. *A Christian indeed* is one whose *Repentance* hath been deep, and serious, and universal, and unchangeable : It hath gone to the very roots of sin, and to the bottom of the sore, and hath not left behind it any reigning unmortified sin ; nor any prevalent love to fleshly pleasures : His *Repentance* did not only *disgrace* his sin, and cast some *reproachful words* against it, and use confessions to *excuse* him from mortification, and to *save its life*, and hide it from the mortal blow. Nor doth he only repent of his *open* sins, and those that are most censured by the beholders of his life : But he specially perceives the dangerous poyson of *Pride*, and *unbelief*, and *worldliness*, and the want of the *Love of God*, and all his outward and smaller sins, do serve to shew him the greater malignity of these, and these are the matter of his greatest lamentations. He taketh not up a profession of Religion with strong cor-
ruptions

ruptions secretly covered in his heart: But his Religion consisteth in the death of his corruptions, and the purifying of his heart; He doth not secretly cherish any sin as too sweet or too profitable to be utterly forsaken, nor overlook it as a small inconsiderable matter. But he feelth sin to be his *enemy* and his *disease*, and as he desireth not *one* enemy, *one* sickness, *one* wound, *one* broken bone, *one* serpent in his bed; so he desireth not any *one* sin to be spared in his soul: But saith with David, Psal. 139. 23. *Search me O God, and know my heart: try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me: and lead me in the way everlasting.* He liveth in no gross or scandalous sin: And his infirmities are comparatively few and small; so that if he were not a sharper accuser of himself, than the most observant spectators are (that are just) there would little be known by him that is culpable and matter of reproof. He *walketh in all the commandments and ordinances of God blameless* (as to any notable miscarriage) Luk. 1. 6. He is *blameless and harmless, as the son of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation; among whom he shineth as a light in the world*, Phil 2 15. The fear, and love, and obedience of God is the work and tenour of his life.

2. But the *weak Christian*, though he hath no sin but what he is a hater of, and fain would be delivered from, yet alas how imperfect is his deliverance? and how weak is the hatred of his sin, and mixed with so much proneness to it, that his life is much blemished with the spots of his offences. Though his *unbelief*, and *pride*, and *worldliness* are not predominant in him, yet are they (or some

some of them) still so strong, and fight so much against his *saith*, *humility*, and *beavenlineſſ*, that he can ſcarcely tell which hath the upper hand; nor can others that ſee the failings of his life, diſcern whether the good or the evil be moſt prevalent. Though it be Heaven which he moſt ſeeketh, yet *Earth* is ſo much regarded by him, that his Heavenly mindedneſs is greatly damped and ſuppreſſed by it. And though it be the way of Godlineſs and obedience which he walketh in, yet is it with ſo many ſtumblings and falls, if not deviations alſo, that maketh him oft a burthen to himſelf, a ſhame to his profeſſion, and a ſnare or trouble to thoſe about him. His heart is like an ill ſwept houſe, that hath many a ſluttriſh corner in it. And his life is like a moth-eaten garment, which hath many a hole, which you may ſee if you bring it into the light. 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2, 3. & 6. 6, 7, 8. & 11. 18, 21, 22, &c.

3. And for the *ſeeming Chriſtian*, his Repentance doth but cropp the branches, it goeth not to the root and heart of his ſin: It leaveth his *ſleſhly* mind and intereſt in the dominion: It poliſheth his life, but maketh him not a new creature. It caſteth away thoſe ſins which the *ſleſh* can ſpare, and which bring more ſhame or loſs or trouble with them, than worldly honour, gain or pleaſure: But ſtill he is a very worldling at the heart; and the ſins which his *ſleſhly* pleaſures and felicity conſiſteth in, he will hide by confeſſions and ſeeming oppoſitions, but never mortifie and forſake. As *Judas*, that while he followed Chriſt was yet a *thief* and a covetous hypocrite. Job. 12. 6. 1 Tim. 6. 10 11.

XI. 1. Hence it followeth that a *Chriſtian* indeed

deed doth heartily love the *searching light*, that it may fully acquaint him with his sins: He is truly desirous to know the worst of himself: And therefore useth the word of God, as a candle to shew him what is in his heart; and bringeth himself willingly into the light: He loveth the most searching Books and Preachers: not only because they disclose the faults of other men, but his own: he is not one that so loveth his pleasant and profitable sins, as to fly the light, lest he should be forced to know them, and so to forsake them: But because he hateth them, and is resolved to forsake them, therefore he would know them. *Job.* 3. 19, 20, 21. Therefore he is not only *patient* under *Reproofs*, but *loveth* them, and is *thankful* to a *charitable* reprovcr; and maketh a good use even of *malicious* and *passionate* reproofs. *Psal.* 141. 5. *2 Sam.* 16. 11. He saith as in *Job* 34. 32. *That which I see not, teach thou me. If I have done iniquity, I will do no more.* His hatred of the sin, and desire to be reformed, suffer not his heart by pride to rise up against the remedy, and reject reproof. Though he will not falsely confess his duty to be his sin, nor take the judgement of every selfish, passionate or ignorant reprovcr to be infallible, nor to be his rule; yet if a judicious impartial person do but *suspect* him of a fault, he is ready to suspect himself of it, unless he be certain that he is clear. He loveth him better that would save him from his sin, than him that would entice him to it: and taketh him for his best friend who dealeth freely with him, and is the greatest enemy to his faults. And a flatterer he taketh but for the most dangerous insinuating kind of foe.

2. But the *weak Christian*, though he hate his sin, and love reformation, and loveth the most searching Books and Preachers, and loveth a gentle kind of reproof, yet hath so much pride and selfishness remaining, that any reproof that seemeth *disgracefull* to him, goeth very hardly down with him: like a bitter medicine to a queasie stomach: If you reprove him *before others*, or if your reproof be not very carefully sugured and minced, so that it rather extenuate than aggravate his fault, he will be ready to cast it up into your face, and with retortions to tell you of some faults of your own, or some way shew you how little he loveth it, and how little thanks he giveth you for it. If you will not let him alone with his infirmities, he will distaste you, if not fall out with you, and let you know by his smart and impatience, that you have touched him in the sore and galled place. He must be a man of very great skill in managing a Reproof, that shall not somewhat provoke him to distaste.

3. And for the *seeming Christian*, this is his condemnation, that *Light is come into the world, and he loveth darknesse rather than light, because his deeds are evil.* He cometh not to the light, lest his deeds should be discovered and reproved, Joh. 3. 19, 20, 21. He liketh a searching Preacher for others, and loveth to hear their sins laid open, if it no way reflect upon himself. But for himself he liketh best a *General* or a *smoothing* Preacher; and he flyeth from a quick and searching ministry, lest he should be proved and convinced to be in a state of sin and misery. Guilt maketh him fear or hate a *lively* searching Preacher, even as the guilty prisoner hateth the Judge. He loveth no company

pany so well as that which thinketh highly of him, and applaudeth and commendeth him, and neither by their reproofes nor stricter lives, will trouble his conscience with the remembrance of his sin, or the knowledge of his misery. He will take you for his enemy for telling him the truth, if you go about to convince him of his undone condition, and tell him of his beloved sin: Sin is taken to be as himself; It is *He* that doth evil, and not only *sin* that dwelleth in him: And therefore all that you say against his *sin*, he taketh it as spoken against himself; and he will defend his sin as he would defend himself: He will hear you till you come to touch himself, as the Jews did by Stephen Act. 7. 51, 54. when they heard him call them *stiffnecked resisters of God and persecutors*, then they *were cut to the heart, and grind their teeth at him*. And as they did by Paul Act. 22. 22. *They gave audience to this word, and then lift up their voices and said, away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live*. Gal. 4. 16. Joh 9. 40. Mat. 21. 45. The priests and pharisees would have laid hands on Christ, when they perceived that he spoke of them. And Ahab hated Mischeiah, because he did not prophesie good of him, but evil. 1 King. 22. 8. Deservedly do they perish in their sin and misery, that hate him that would deliver them, and refuse the remedy. Prov. 12. 1. *Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge, but he that hateth reproof is brutish*. Prov. 29. 1. *He that bring often reprov'd hardneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy*.

XII. 1. A Christian indeed, is one that unfeignedly desireth to attain to the highest degree of holiness, and to be perfectly freed from every thing that

that is sin. He desireth perfection, though not with a perfect desire. He sitteth not down contentedly in any low degree of grace. He looketh on the holiest (how poor soever) with much more reverence and esteem than on the most rich and honourable in the world. And he had far rather be one of the most holy, than one of the most prosperous and great: He had rather be a *Paul* or *Timothy*, than a *Cesar* or an *Alexander*. He complaineth of nothing with so much sorrow, as that he can *Know* and *Love* his God no more! How happy an exchange would he count it, if he had more of the Knowledge and Love of God, though he lost all his wealth and honour in the world. His smallest sins are a greater burden to him, than his greatest corporal wants and sufferings. As *Paul*, who because he could not perfectly fulfill Gods Law, and be as good as he would be, crieth out as in bondage, *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?* Rom. 7. 27.

2. And for the *weak Christian*, though he is habitually and resolutely of the same mind, yet alas his desires after perfection are much more languid in him: And he hath too much patience and reconciledness to some of his sins; and sometimes taketh them to be sweet: So that his enmity to his Pride, or Covetousness, or passion is much abated, and suffereth his sin to waste his grace and wound his conscience, and hinder much of his communion with God. He seeth not the odiousness of sin, nor the beauty of Holiness with so clear a sight as the confirmed Christian doth. He hateth sin more for the ill effects of it, than for its malignant hateful nature. He seeth not clearly the intrinsic evil that is in sin, which maketh
it

it deserve the pains of hell. Nor doth he discern the difference between a holy and an unholy soul, so clearly as the stronger Christian doth. 1 Cor. 3. 2, 3. Heb. 12. 1.

3. And as for the *seeming Christian*, though he may approve of perfect holiness in another, and may wish for it himself, when he thinketh of it but in the general, and not as it is exclusive and destructive of his beloved sin; yet when it cometh to *particulars* he cannot away with it: He is so far from *desiring* it, that he will *not endure it*. The name of holiness he liketh; and that preservation from Hell which is the consequent of it: But when he understandeth what it is, he hath no mind of it. That holiness which should cure his *ambition* and *pride*, and make him contented with a low condition, he doth not like: He loveth not that holiness, which would deprive him of his *covetousness*, his *intemperance* in pleasant *meats* and *drinks*; his *fleshy lusts*, and inordinate *pleasures*! Nor doth he desire that holiness should employ his soul in the Love of God, and in daily prayer and meditating on his word, and raise him to a heavenly life on earth.

XIII. 1. A *Christian indeed* is one that maketh God and Heaven the *End*, *Reward* and *Motive* of his Life: And liveth not in the world for any thing in the world, but for that endless happiness which the next world only can afford. The Reasons which actuate his thoughts, and choice, and all his life, are fetcht from Heaven. The interest of God and his soul as to eternity, is the ruling interest in him. As a traveller goeth all the way, and beareth all the difficulties of it, for the sake of the End or Place that he is going to: (how
ever

ever he may talk of many other matters by the way :) so is it with a Christian : he knoweth nothing worthy of his life and labours, but that which he hopeth for hereafter. This world is too sinful, and too vile, and short, to be his felicity. His very trade and work in the world is to lay up a treasure in heaven, Mat. 6. 20. *and to lay up a good foundation against the time to come, and to lay hold on eternal life :* 1 Tim. 6. 19. And therefore his very heart is there Mat. 6. 21. and he is employed in seeking and setting his affections on the things above Col. 3. 1, 2, 3. And his conversation and traffick is in Heaven Phil. 3. 20, 21. *He looketh not at the things which are seen which are temporal, but at the things which are not seen which are eternal* 2 Cor. 4. 18. He is a stranger upon earth, and Heaven is to him as his home.

2. The weak Christian also hath the same *End* and *Hope* and *Motive* ; and preferreth his hopes of the life to come before all the wealth and pleasures of this life : But yet his thoughts of Heaven are much more *strange* and *dull* : He hath so much doubting and fear yet mixed with his faith and hope, that he looketh before him to his everlasting state, with backwardness and trouble, and with small desire and delight : He hath so much hope of Heaven, as to abate his fears of hell, and make him think of eternity with more *quietness*, than he could do if he found himself unregenerate : But not so much as to make his thoughts of Heaven so free and sweet and *frequent*, nor his desires after it so strong, as the *confirmed Christians* are. And therefore his duties and his speech of Heaven, and his endeavours to obtain it, are all more languid and unconstant : And he is much

proner to fall in love with earth, and to entertain the motions of reconciliation to the world; and to have his heart too much set upon some place, or person or thing below, and to be either delighted too much in the possession of it, or afflicted and troubled too much with the loss of it. Earthly things are too much the *Motives* of his life, and the reasons of his *joyes* and *griefs*: Though he hath the true belief of a life to come, and it prevaieth in the main against the world, yet it is but little that he *useth* it to the commanding and raising and comforting his soul, in comparison of what a strong believer doth: *Mat. 16. 22, 23.*

3. But the *seeming Christian* would serve God and *Mammon*, and placeth his chief and certainest happiness *practically* upon earth: Though *speculatively* he know and say that Heaven is better, yet doth he not *practically* judge it to be so to him: And therefore he loveth the world above it, and he doth most carefully *lay up a treasure on earth* *Mat. 6. 19.* and is resolved first to seek and secure his portion here below; and yet he taketh Heaven for a reserve, as knowing that the world will cast him off at last, and dye he must, there is no remedy; and therefore he taketh heaven as *next* unto the best; as his *second* hope; as better than hell; and will go in Religion as far as he can, without the *loss* of his prosperity here: so that *earth* and *flesh* do govern and command the design and tenor of his life; But heaven and his soul shall have all that *they can* spare; which may be enough to make him pass with men for eminently religious. 1 *Job. 2. 15. Mat. 13. 22. Luke 18. 22, 23. Luk. 14. 24, 33. Ps. 17. 14. Phil. 3. 18, 19, 20.*

XIV. 1. A Christian indeed is one that having taken heaven for his felicity doth account no labour or cost too great for the obtaining of it: he hath nothing so dear to him in this world, which he cannot spare and part with for God and the world to come. He doth not only notionally know that nothing should seem too dear or hard for the securing of our salvation; but he knoweth this practically and is resolved accordingly. Though difficulties may hinder him in particular acts; and his executions come not up to the height of his desires (*Rom. 7. 16, 17. &c.*) yet he is resolved that he will never break on terms with Christ: There is no duty so hard which he is not willing and resolved to perform: and no sin so sweet or gainful which he is not willing to forsake. He knoweth how unprofitable a bargain he makes, who winneth the world, and loseth his own soul; and that no gain can ransom his soul, or recompence him for the loss of his salvation. *Mar. 8. 36.* He knoweth that it is impossible to be a loser by God; or to purchase heaven at too dear a rate: he knoweth that whatsoever it cost him, heaven will fully pay for all: and that it is the worldlings labour, and not the saints, that is repented of at last. He marvelleth more at distracted sinners, for making such a stir for wealth and honours and command, than they marvail at him for making so much a-doe for heaven. He knoweth that this world may be too dear bought, but so cannot his salvation: yea he knoweth that even our duty it self, is not our smallest priviledge and mercy: And that the more we do for God, the more we receive, and the greater is our gain and honour: and that the suf-

ufferings of believers for righteousness sake, do not only prognosticate their joyes in heaven, but occasion here the greatest joyes, that any sort of heaven partake of: *Mat. 5. 11, 12. Rom. 5. 1, 2, 3, &c.* He is not one that desireth the end without the means, and would be saved so it may be on cheap and easie terms: But he absolutely yieldeth to the terms of Christ, and saith with *Austin, Da, quod jubes, & jube quod vis: Cause me to do what thou commandest, and command what thou wilt.* Though *Pelagius* contradicted the first sentence, and the flesh the second, yet *Augustine* owned both: and so doth every true believer. He greatly complaineth of his backwardness to obey, but never complaineth of the strictness of the command. He loveth the holiness, justness and goodness of the Laws when he bewaileth the unholiness and badness of his heart: He desireth not God to command him less, but desireth grace and ability to do more. He is so far from the mind of the ungodly world, who cry out against too much holiness and making so much ado for heaven, that he desireth even to reach to the degree of Angels, and would fain have *Gods will to be done on earth, as it is done in heaven*: and therefore the more desireth to be in heaven, that he may do it better. *Psal. 119. 5. Rom. 7. 24.*

2. The weak Christian hath the same estimation and resolution: But when it comes to practice, as his will is less confirmed and more corrupted and divided, so little impediments and difficulties are great temptations to him, and stop him more in the way of his obedience. All his duty is much more tedious to him, and all his sufferings are much

more burthenſome to him; than to confirmed *Chriſtians*: And therefore he is eaſier tempted into omiſſions and impatieney, and walketh not ſo evenly, or comfortably with God. When the ſpirit is *willing*, it yieldeth oft to the weakneſs of the fleſh, becauſe it is *willing* in too remiſs a degree. *Mat. 26. 41. Gal. 2. 14.*

3. But the *ſeeming Chriſtian* (though *notionally* and *generally* he may approve of ſtriſtneſs) yet ſecretly at the heart hath alwaies this reſerve, that he will not ſerve God at too dear a rate. His worldly felicity he cannot part with; for all the hopes of the life to come: And yet he will not, he dare not renounce and give up thoſe hopes: And therefore he maketh himſelf a Religion of the eaſieſt and cheapeſt parts of Chriſtianity, (among which ſometimes the ſtriſteſt opinions may fall out to be one part, ſo be it they be ſeparated from the ſtriſteſt practice:) And this eaſie cheap Religion he will needs believe to be true *Chriſtianity* and *Godlineſs*; and ſo will hope to be ſaved upon theſe terms: And though he cannot but know that it is the certain character of a hypocrite, to have any thing nearer and dearer to his heart than God, yet he hopeth that it is not ſo with him, becauſe his convinced judgement can ſay that *God is beſt* and the *world is vanity*, while yet his *heart* and *affections* ſo much contradict his opinion, as almoſt to ſay: *There is no God*: For his heart knoweth and loveth no God as God, that is, above his worldly happineſs. He is reſolved to do ſo much in religion as he findeth neceſſary to delude his conſcience, and make himſelf believe that he is godly and ſhall be ſaved: but when he cometh to forſake all and take up

the Cross, and practise the costliest parts of duty, then you shall see that *Mammon* was better loved than God, and he will go away sorrowful, and hope to be saved upon easier terms. *Luke* 18. 23. For he was never resigned absolutely to God.

XV. 1. A confirmed Christian, is one that taketh *self-denial* for the one half of his Religion; and therefore hath bestowed one half of his endeavours to attain and exercise it. He knoweth that the fall of man, was a turning to himself from God: And that *selfishness* and want of Love to God, are the summ of all corruption and ungodliness: And that the Love of God and *self-denial* are the summ of all religion: And that conversion is nothing but the turning of the heart from carnal self to God by Christ: And therefore on this hath his care and labour been so successfully laid out, that he hath truly and practically found out something that is much better than himself, and to be loved and preferred before himself; and which is to be his chiefest ultimate end: He maketh not a God of himself any more, but useth himself for God, to fulfill his will, as a creature of his own, that hath no other end and use. He no more preferreth himself above all the world, but esteemeth himself a poor and despicable part of the world: And highlier valueth the honour of God, and the welfare of the church, and the good of many, than any interest of his own. Though God in nature hath taught him to regard his own felicity and to love himself, and not to seek the glory of God, and the good of many souls in opposition to his own; yet hath he taught him to prefer them (though in conjunction) much before his own: For reason telleth him that man is nothing in comparison of God, and that we are made

by

by him and for him; and that the welfare of the Church or publick societies is better (in order to the highest ends) than the welfare of some one. *Selfishness* in the unregenerate, is like an inflammation or apposteme, which draweth the humours from other parts of the body to it self: The interest of God and man are all swallowed up in the regard that men have to *self-interest*: And the Love of God and our neighbour are turned into *self-love*. But *self* is as annihilated in the confirmed Christian, so that it ruleth not his *Judgement*, his *affections*, or his *choice*: And he that lived in and to himself, as if God and all the world were but for him, doth now live to God, as one that is good for nothing else, and findeth himself in seeking him that is infinitely above himself. Luk. 14. 31, 32, 33. Phil. 2. 4, 21.

2. And the weak Christian hath attained to so much *selfdenial* that *self* is not predominant in him against the Love of God and his neighbour: But yet above all other sins, too great a measure of *selfishness* still remaineth in him: These words [*own*, and *mine*, and *self*] are too significant with him: every thing of his, *own* is regarded inordinately, with partiality and too much *selfishness*. A word against *himself*, or an injury to *himself*, is more to him than worse against his brother: He is too little mindfull of the glory of God, and of the publick good, and the souls of others; and even when he is mindful of his *own* soul, he is too regardless of the souls of many, that by prayer or exhortation or other means he ought to help: As a small candle lighteth but a little way, and a small fire heateth not farr off, so is his Love so much confined, that it reacheth not farr from him: He

valueth his friends too much upon their respect to please himself, and loveth men too much as they are partiall for him; and too little upon the pure account of grace, and their love to Christ and servisableness to the Church: He easily overvalueth his own abilities, and is too confident of his *own* understanding, and apt to have too high conceits of any opinions that are his *own*; he is too apt to be tempted unto uncharitableness, against those that cross him in his *interest* or *way*: he is apt to be too negligent in the work of God, when any *selfinterest* doth stand against it; and too much to *seek* himself, his *own* esteem, or his *own* commodity, when he should devote himself to the good of souls, and give up himself to the work of God: Though he is not like the hypocrite that *preferreth* himself before the *will* of God and the common good, yet *selfishness* greatly stoppeth, interrupteth and hindreth him in Gods work; and any great *danger* or *loss* or shame, or other concernment of his *own*, doth seem a greater matter to him, and oftner turn him out of the way, than it will with a confirmed Christian: They were not all hypocrites that Paul speaketh of in that sad complaint, Phil. 2. 20, 21. *For I have no man like minded (to Timothy) who will naturally care for your state, for all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christs:*] that is; They too much seek their own, and not entirely enough the things that are Christs: which Timothy did naturally as if he had been born to it, and Grace had made the Love of Christ and the souls of men and the good of others as *naturall* to him as the Love of himself. Alas how lowly do their own distempers and soul miscarriages, and the divisions,

divisions, and calamities of the Church, proclaim, that the weaker sort of Christians have yet too much *selfishness*, and that *self-denial* is lamentably imperfect in them.

3. But in the *seeming Christian selfishness* is still the predominant principle: he loveth God but for *himself*; and he never had any higher end than *self*: All his Religion, his opinions, his practice is animated by *self-love*, and governed by it, even by the Love of *carnal self*: *self-esteem*, *self-conceitedness*, *self-love*, *self-willedness*, *self-seeking* and *self-saving*, are the constitution of his heart and life. He will be of that opinion, and way and party in Religion, which *selfishness* directeth him to choose: He will go no *farther* in Religion, than *self-interest* and *safety* will allow him to go. He can change his friend, and turn his love into hatred, and his praises into reproach, when ever *self-interest* shall require it. He can make himself believe, and labour to make others believe, that the *wisest* and *holiest* servants of God, are *erroneous*, *humorous*, *hypocrites*, and *unsufferable*, if they do but stand cross to *his* opinions and interest. For he *judgeth* of them, and *loveth* or *hateth* them, principally as they *conform* to *his will* and *interest*, or as they are *against* it: As the godly measure all persons and things, by the *will* and *interest* of God, so do all ungodly men esteem them as they stand in reference to *themselves*. When their *factious* interest required it, the *Jews*, and specially the *Pharisees*, could make themselves and others believe, that the Son of God himself was a breaker of the Law, and an enemy to *Cæsar*; and a blasphemer, and unworthy to live on the earth: And that *Paul* was a pestilent fellow, and a mover
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of sedition among the people, and a ringleader of a sect, and a prophaner of the Temple, *Act.* 24. 5, 6. and which of the Prophets and Apostles did they not persecute? Because Christs doctrine doth cross the interest of *selfish* men, therefore the world doth so generally rise up against it with indignation; even as a Country will rise against an invading enemy: For he cometh to take away that which is dearest to them: As it is said of *Luther*, that he medled with the Popes crown, and the Fryars bellies: and therefore no wonder if they swarmed all about his ears. *Selfishness* is so generall and deeply rooted, that (except with a few *self-denying Saints*) *self-love* and *self-interest* ruleth the world: And if you would know how to please a graceless man, serve but his carnal interest, and you have done it: Be of his opinion (or take on you to be so,) applaud him, admire him, flatter him, obey him, promote his preferment, honour and wealth, be against his enemies; in a word, make him your God, and sell your soul to gain his favour, and so it's possible you may gain it.

XVI. I. *A Christian* indeed hath so far mortified the *flesh*, and brought all his *senses and appetite* into subjection to sanctified Reason, as that there is no great rebellion or perturbation in his mind; but a little matter, a holy thought, or a word from God, doth presently rebuke and quiet his inordinate desires: The *flesh* is as a well-broken and well-ridden horse, that goeth on his journey obediently and quietly, and not with striving and chafing and vexatious resisting: Though still *flesh* will be *flesh*, and will be *weak*, and will fight against the spirit, so that we cannot

not do all the good we would, (*Isa. 5. 17. Rom. 7. 16, 17, &c.*) yet in the confirmed Christian, it is so far tamed and subdued, that its rebellion is much less, and its resistance weaker, and more easily overcome: It causeth not any notable unevenness in his obedience, nor blemishes in his life: it is no other than consisteth with a readiness to obey the will of God. *Gal. 5. 24, 25. 1 Cor. 9. 26, 27. They that are Christs have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof: They run not as uncertainly: they fight not as one that beateth the air: but they keep under their bodies, and bring them into subjection, lest by any means they should be castaways: They put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof Rom. 13. 13, 14.* As we see to a temperate man, how sweet and easie temperance is, when to a glutton or drunkard, or riotous liver it is exceeding hard: so it is in all other points with a confirmed Christian. He hath so far crucified the flesh, that it is as dead to its former lusts, and so far mastered it, that it doth easily and quickly yield: And this maketh the life of such a Christian, not only pure, but very easie to him, in comparison of other mens. Nay, more than this, he can use his *sense* (as he can use the world, the objects of sense) in subserviency to faith and his salvation. His eye doth but open a window to his mind to hold and admire the Creator in his work: His *tast* of the *sweetness* of the creatures is but a *means*, by which the sweeter Love of God doth pass directly to his heart: His *sense* of *pleasure* is but the passage of spiritual holy pleasure to his mind: His *sense* of bitterness and pain is but
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the messenger to tell his heart, of the bitterness and vexatiousness of sin. As God in the creation of us, made our senses, but as the inlet and passage for himself into our minds, (even as he made all the *creatures* to represent him to us by this passage;) so grace doth restore our very senses (with the creature) to this their holy original use : that the goodness of God through the goodness of the creature, may pass to our hearts, and be the effect and end of all.

2. But, for the *weak Christian*, though he have *mortified the deeds of the body by the spirit*, and *live not after the flesh* but be freed from its captivity or reign (Gal. 5. 24. Rom. 8. 1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.) yet hath he such remnants of concupiscence and sensuality, as make it a far harder matter to him to live in temperance, and deny his appetite, and govern his senses; and restrain them from rebellion, and excess: He is like a weak man upon an ill-ridden headstrong horse, who hath much ado to keep his saddle and keep his way. He is stronglier inclined to fleshly lusts, or excess in meat, or drink, or sleep, or sports, or some such fleshly pleasure, than the mortified temperate person is, and therefore is oftener guilty of some excess: so that his life is a very tiresome conflict, and very unequal to himself: because the less the flesh is mortified, the more able it is to raise perturbations, and to put *faith* and *reason* to a continual fight. And most of the scandals and blemishes of his life arise from hence; even the successes of the flesh against the spirit; so that (though he live not in any gross or wilful sins; yet) in lesser measures of excess he is too frequently overtaken: How few be there that in

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meat and sleep do not usually exceed their measure? And they are easily tempted to libertine opinions, which indulge the flesh, having a weaker prefer-
vative against them than stronger Christians have. *Mat.* 16. 22, 23. *Gal.* 5. 13. & 1. 16. & 2. 13, 13, 14. *Col.* 2. 11.

3. But the *seeming Christian* is really carnal. The *flesh* is the predominant part with him; and the *interest* of the flesh is the ruling interest. He washeth away the outward filth, and in hope of salvation, will be as religious as the *flesh* will give him leave; and will deny it in some smaller matters; and will serve it in a religious way, and not in so gross and impudent a manner as the Atheists and openly profane. But for all that he never conquered the flesh indeed; but seeketh its prosperity more than the pleasing of God and his salvation: And among prayers and sermons and holy conference and books, yea and formal *fastings* too, he is serving the *flesh*, with so much the more dangerous impenitencie, by how much the more his cloak of formality hindereth him from the discerning of his sin: many a one that is of unblemished reputation in Religion, doth constantly serve his appetite in meat and drink, (though without any notable excess,) and his fleshly mind in the pleasure of his dwelling, wealth and accommodations, as much as some profane ones do, if not much more. And whenever it cometh to a parting trial, they will shew that the flesh was the ruling part, and will venture their souls to secure its interest. *Luke* 18. 23. & 14. 33, *Ram*, 8. 5, 6, 7, 9, 13. *Mat.* 13. 21, 22. *Jud.* 19.

XVII. 1. Hence it followeth that a *Christian*
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indeed preferreth the means of his spiritual benefit and salvation incomparably before all corporal commodities and pleasures. He had rather dwell under the teaching and guidance of an able experienced Pastor, though it be cross to his prosperity and worldly gain, than to live under an ignorant or dead hearted Preacher, when it furthereth his trading or more accommodateth his flesh: (Though yet he must not remove when God layeth any restraint upon him, by his duty to his family, or others:) He had rather if he be a servant, dwell in a family, where he may do or receive most spiritual good, than in a carnal family, where he may have more ease, and better fare, and greater wages. If he be to marry, he had rather have one that hath wisdom and piety without wealth, than one that hath riches without wisdom and piety. He is gladder of an opportunity (in publick or private) for the profit of his soul, than of a feast, or a good bargain, or an opportunity for some gain in worldly things: *Mat. 6. 20. 33.*

2. And the *weak Christian* is of the same mind in the main. He valueth mercies and helps for his soul, above those for his body: But it is with less zeal, and more indifferency; and therefore is more easily and often drawn to the omitting of spiritual duties, and neglect of spiritual helps and mercies: and goeth to them with more averfness, and as driven by necessity: and is much less sensible of his loss, when he misseth of any such spiritual helps. *Luk. 10. 41, 42. Heb. 10. 25. Act. 2. 42. & 4. 32.*

3. But the *seeming Christian* being a *real worldling*, doth serve God and Mammon; and Mam-

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mon with the *first* and *best*: He had rather miss a Sermon, than a good bargain or commodity: he had rather dwell where he may thrive best, or have most ease and pleasure, than where he may find the greatest helps for heaven: he will be Religious, but it must be with an easie and a pleasant and merry Religion; which may not be too niggardly with his flesh, nor use it too strictly; unless when one days austerity may procure him an indulgence for his liberty all the week following. He will make his bargain with Christ so, as to be sure that he may not lose by him: And he will not believe that God is pleased with that which is much displeasing to his flesh. *Rom. 8. 5, 6, 7, 8, 13. Mat. 13. 21, 22.*

XVIII. 1: The *Christian* indeed is one that is crucified to the world, and the world is as a crucified thing to him: *Gal. 6. 14.* He hath overcome the world by faith, and followeth Christ in the pursuit of it, to a perfect conquest. 1 *Job. 5. 4, 5. Job. 16. 33.* He hath seen through all its glosing vanity, and foreseen what it will prove at last: He hath found that it cannot quiet conscience, nor reconcile the guilty soul to God, nor save it from his consuming wrath; nor serve instead of God or Heaven, of Christ or grace; but will cast off its servants in their last extremity, naked and desolate into remediless despair: And therefore he is resolvedly at a point with all things under the Sun: Let them take the world for their portion and felicity that will: For his part, he accounteth all things in it dung and dross in comparison of Christ and things eternal, *Phil. 3. 7, 8, 19, 20.* All the preferments, and honours, and command, and wealth, and greatness of the world, do not seem

seem to him a bate considerable, to make a wise man once question whether he should persevere in faithfulness to God, or to tempt him to commit one wilful sin: He would not speak, or own a lie, or approve the sin of any other, for all that worldlings enjoy in their greatest prosperity while they live. He accounteth his peace with God and conscience, and his communion with Christ in the greatest povertie, to be incomparably better than all the pleasures and commodities of sin: yea the very reproach of Christ is better to him than all the treasures of Court or Country, *Heb. 11. 25, 26.* Grace hath mortified and annihilated the world to him: And that which is *dead* and *nothing* can *do nothing* with him against God and his soul. He looketh on it as a carrion, which dogs may love and fight for; but is unfit to be the food of man: He is going to the land of promise; and therefore will not contend for an inheritance in this howling wilderness. Whether he be high or low, rich or poor, are so small a part of his concerns, that he is almost indifferent to them, farther than as the interest of God and souls, may accidentally be concerned in them. The *world* set against God and Heaven and holiness, doth weigh no more in his estimation, than a feather that is put in the ballance against a mountain or all the world. He seeth no great force in such temptations, as would draw him to win the world and lose his soul. His eye and heart are, where his God and treasure is, above; and worldly wealth and greatness are below him, even under his feet: He thinketh not things temporal worth the *looking at*, in comparison of things eternal, *2 Cor. 4. 18.* He thinketh

thinketh that their money and riches do deservedly perish with them, who think all the money in the world, to be a thing comparable with grace.

Act. 8. 20.

2. And the *weak Christian* is of the same judgement and resolution in the main: But yet the world retaineth a greater interest in his heart: It grieveth him more to lose it: It is a stronger temptation to him: To deny all the preferments and honours and riches of it, seemeth a *greater matter* to him: and he doth it with more striving and less ease: and sometimes the respect of worldly things prevaileth with him in lesser matters, to wound his conscience, and maketh work for repentance; and such are so entangled in worldly cares, and prosperity tasteth so sweet with them, that grace even languisheth and falleth into a consumption, and almost into a swoon. So much do some such let out their hearts, to the world which they renounced, and scrape for it with so much care and eagerness, and contend with others about their commodities and rights, that they seem to the standers by to be as worldly as worldlings themselves are; and become a shame to their profession, and make ungodly persons say, *Your godly professors are as covetous as any,* 2 Tim.

4. 10.

3. But *seeming Christians* are the servants of the world: when they have learnt to speak hard-
 lies of it, it hath their hearts: Heaven (as I said before) is valued but as a *reserve*, when they know they can keep the world no longer. They have more sweet and pleasing thoughts and speeches of the world, than they have of God and the world to come: It hath most of their

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hearts ; when God is most preferred by their tongues : there it is that they are daily laying up their treasure , and there they must leave it at the parting hour , when they go naked out as they came naked in : the love of deceitful riches choaketh the word of God , and it withereth in them , and becometh unfruitful , *Mat. 13. 22.* They go away sorrowful because of their beloved riches , when they should part with all for the hopes of heaven . *Luk. 18. 23.* yea though they are beggars that never have a dayes prosperity in the world , for all that , they love it better than heaven , and desire that which they cannot get : because they have not an eye of faith , to see that better world which they neglect , and therefore take it for an uncertsin thing : nor are their carnal natures suitable to it , and therefore they mind it not . *Rom. 8. 7.* When an Hypocrite is at the best , he is but a Religious worldling : The world is neerer to his heart than God is , but *pure Religion keepeth a man unspotted of the world : Jam. 1. 27.*

XIX. 1. A confirmed Christian is one , that still seeth the end in all that he doth , and that is before him in his way : and looketh not at things as at the present they seem or relish to the flesh , or to short sighted men ; but as they will appear and be judged of at last . The first letter maketh not the word , nor the first word the sentence , without the last . Present time is quickly past ; and therefore he less regardeth what things seem at present , than what they will prove to all eternity . When temptations offer him a bate to sin , with the present profit , or pleasure ; or honour , he seeth at once the final shame : he seeth all worldly things as they are seen by a dying man :
and

and as after the general conflagration they will be. He seeth the godly in his adversity and patience, as entring into his masters-joys: he seeth the derided vilified saint, as ready to stand justified by Christ at his right hand; and the lyes of the malicious world, as ready to cover themselves with shame: he seeth the wicked in the height of their prosperity as ready to be cut down and withered, and their pampered flesh to turn to dirt; and their filthy and malicious souls, to stand condemned by Christ at his left hand, and to hear, *Go ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels. Mat. 25. 1 Pet. 1. 24. Jam. 1. 10, 11. Psal. 73. 37.* Therefore it is that he valueth grace, because he knoweth what it *will be*: and therefore it is that he flieth from sin, because he *knoweth the terrors of the Lord*, and what it will prove to the sinner in the *end*; and how sinners themselves will curse the day that ever they did commit it; and wish when it is too late, that they had chosen the holiness and patience of the saints: and therefore it is that he *pitieth* rather than *envieth* the prosperous enemies of the Church, because he foreseeth what the *end will be of them that obey not the Gospel of Christ*; and if the righteous be scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? 1 Pet. 4. 17, 18. 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9, 10. If the wicked unbelievers saw but the *ending* of all things as he doth, they would be all then of his mind and way. This putteth so much life into his prayers, his obedience and patience, because he seeth the end in all. *Dent. 32. 29, Prov. 19. 20. Isai. 47. 7.*

2. And the *weakest Christian* doth the same in the main, so far as to turn his heart from things temporal, to things eternal; and to resolve him

in his main choice, and to conduct the course of his life towards heaven. But yet in particular actions he is often stopt in present things, and forgetfully loseth the sight of the end, and so is deluded and entised into sin, for want of seeing that which should have preserved him: he is like one that travelleth over hills and vallies, who when he is upon the hills doth see the place that he is going to, but when he cometh into the vallies, it is out of his sight. Too oft doth the weak Christian think of things as they appear at the present, with little sense of the change that is neer: when he seeth the bates of sin, whether riches, or beauty, or meat and drink, or any thing that is pleasing to the senses, the remembrance of the end doth not so quickly and powerfully work, to prevent his deceived imaginations, as it ought. And when poverty, or shame, or sufferings, or sickness, are presented to him, the foresight of the end is not so speedy and powerful in clearing his judgement, and settling his resolution, and preventing his misapprehension and trouble as it ought. And hence come his oft mistakes and falls: and herein consisteth much of that foolishness, which he confesseth when Repentance bringeth him to himself. 2 Sam. 24. 10. 2 Chron. 16. 9.

3. But the *seeming Christian* hath so dim and doubtful a fore-sight of the end, and it is so frequently out of his mind, that *things present* do carry away his heart, and have the greatest power and interest with him, and are most regarded and sought after in this life. For he is purblind, not seeing a farr off, as it is said, 2 Pet. 1. 9. He wanteth that *faith* which is the *substance of things hoped*

hoped for, and the evidence of things unseen Heb. 11. 1. Things promised in another world, seem to him too uncertain, or too far off, to be preferred before all the happiness of this world; he is resolved to make his best of that which he hath in hand, and to prefer possession before such hopes. Little doth his heart perceive what a change is near, and how the face of all things will be altered! How sin will look, and how the minds of sinners will be changed, and what all the riches, and pleasures, and honours of the world will appear at the latter end! He foreseeth not the day when the slothful, and the worldly, and the fleshly, and the proud, and the enemies of godliness shall all wish in vain, O that we had laid up our treasure in heaven, and laboured for the food that perisheth not, and had set less by all the vanities of the world! and had imitated the holiest and most mortified believers! Though the hypocrite can himself foretell all this, and talk of it to others, yet his belief of it is so dead, and his sensuality so strong, that he liveth by *sense*, and not by that *belief*; and *present things* are practically preferred by him, and bear the sway, so that he needeth those warnings of God, as well as the profane, Deut. 32. *O that they were wise, that they understood this, and that they would consider their latter end:* And he is one of the foolish ones, Mat. 25. 8, 11. who are seeking oyl for their lamps when it is too late, and are crying out, *Lord, Lord, open to us*, when the door is shut; and will not know the time of their visitation, nor know effectually in this their day the things which belong to their everlasting peace.

XX. 1. The Christian indeed is one that liveth

upon God alone. His faith is Divine: his love and obedience and confidence are Divine: his chiefest converse is Divine: his hopes and comforts are Divine: As it is God that he dependeth on, and trusteth to, and studieth to please above all the world, so it is *Gods approbation* that he taketh up with for his justification and reward; He took him for his absolute Governour, and judge, and full *felicity*, in the day when he took him for his *God*. He can live in peace without mans approbation: If men are never acquainted with his sincerity, or virtues, or good deeds, it doth not discourage him nor hinder him from his holy course: he is therefore the same in secret as in publick; because no place is secret from God. If men turn his greatest virtues or duties to his reproach, and slander him, and make him odious to men, and represent him as they did *Paul*, a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition, and the ringleader of a sect, and make him as the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things, this changeth him not, for it changeth not his felicity, nor doth he miss of his reward.

1 Cor. 4. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. Read the words in the text: Though he hath so much suspicion of his own understanding, and reverence for wiser mens, that he will be glad to learn, and will hear reason from any one; yet *praise* and *dispraise* are matters of very small regard with him, and, as to himself, he accounteth it but a small thing to be judged of men, whether they justifie or condemn him; because they are fallible and have not the power of determining any thing, to his great commodity or detriment, nor is it their judgement to, which he stands or falls: 1 Cor. 4. 3. 4.

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He hath a more dreadful or comfortable judgement to prepare for : man is of small account with him in comparison of God. *Rom. 8. 33, 34, 35, 36.*

2. And though with the *weakest true Christian* it is so also as to the *predominancie* of Gods esteem and interest in him, yet is his weakness daily visible in the culpable effects. Though God have the chiefest place in his esteem, yet man hath much more than his due. The thoughts and words of men seem to such, of far greater importance than they should. Praise and dispraise, favours and injuries, are things which affect their hearts too much : they bear not the contempts and wrongs of men, with so quiet and satisfied a mind, as becometh those that live upon God. They have so small experience of the comforts of God in Christ, that they are tasting the deeper of other delights, and spare them not so easily as they ought to do : God, without friends, or house, or land, or maintenance or esteem in the world, doth not fully quiet them ; but there is a deal of peevish impatience left in their minds, though it doth not drive them away from God.

3. But the *seeming Christian* can better take up with the *world alone* than with *God alone* : God is not so much missed by him as the world : He alwayes breaks with Christ when it cometh to *for-saking all* : He is *godly notionally* and *professedly*, and therefore may easily say that *God is his portion*, and enough for those that put their trust in him : But his heart never consented truly to reduce these words to practise. When it comes to the trial, the praise or dispraise of man, and the prosperity or matters of the world, do signifie more with him than the favour or displeasure of God ; and can do more with

him. Christ and riches and esteem he could be content with; but he cannot away with a naked Christ alone. Therefore he is indeed a practical Atheist, even when he seemeth most religious: For if he had ever taken God for his God indeed, he had certainly taken him as his portion, felicity, and all: and therefore as enough for him without the creature. *Luk. 18. 23.*

XXI. 1. For all this it followeth that *A Christian indeed bath with himself devoted all that he hath to God; and so all that he hath is sanctified: he is only in doubt oft times in particular cases, what God would have him do with himself, and his estate; but never in doubt whether they are to be wholly employed for God, in obedience to his will, so far as he can know it: and therefore doth estimate every creature and condition, purely as it relateth unto God and life eternal.* **HOLINES TO THE LORD** is written upon all that he bath and doth: he taketh it as *from God*; and useth it as his Masters goods and talents, not chiefly for himself, but for his Masters ends and will: God appeareth to him in the creature; and is the life, and sweetness, and glory of the creature to him: his first question in every business he undertaketh, or every place or condition that he chooseth is, how it conduceth to the Pleasing of God, and to his spiritual ends: *Whether he eateth or drinketh or what ever he doth, he doth all to the glory of God.* *1 Cor. 10. 31.* The posse engraven on his heart is the name of **GOD**, with **[OF HIM, and THROUGH HIM, and TO HIM ARE ALL THINGS, TO HIM BE GLORY FOR EVER, AMEN.]** *Rom. 11. 36.*

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He liveth as a steward, that useth not his *own*, though yet he have a sufficient reward for his fidelity: and he keepeth accounts both of his receivings and layings out; and reckoneth all to be worse than lost, which he findeth not expended on his Lords account. For himself he asketh not that which is sweetest to the flesh, but that which is fittest to his *end and work*. And therefore desireth not *Riches* (for himself) but *his daily bread*, and food convenient for him; and having food and rayment is therewith content, having taken godlyness for his gain: he asketh not for superfluity, nor for any thing to consume it on his *lusts*, nor to become provision for his flesh, to satisfy the wills thereof: But as a runner in his race, desireth not any provisions which may hinder him: and therefore forgetting the things which are behind (the world which he hath turn'd his back upon) he reacheth forth to the things which are before (the crown of glory) and presseth toward the mark, for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus: not turning an eye to any thing that would stop him in his course. Thus while he is employed about things below, his mind and conversation is heavenly and divine, while all things are estimated and used purely for God and Heaven. Luk. 16. 1, 2. 1 Pet. 4. 10. Tit. 1. 15. Prov. 30. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 6. Jam. 4. 3. Rom. 13. 14. Phil. 3. 13, 14, 15.

2. But the *weak Christian*, though he have all this in desire, and be thus affected and resolved in the main, and liveth to God in the scope and course of his life; yet is too often looking aside, and valuing the creature carnally for it self; and oft-times useth it for the pleasing of the flesh;
and

and almost like a common man: his house, and land, and friends, and pleasures, are relished too carnally, as his own accommodations; and though he walk not after the *flesh* but after the spirit, yet he hath too much of the fleshly taste, and is greatly out in his accounts with God; and turneth many a thing from his masters use, to the service of the flesh; and though he be not as the slothfull wicked servant, yet is it but little improvement that he maketh of his talent. *Mat.* 25. 17, 26, 27, 28.

3. But the *seeming Christian* being carnal and selfish, while his notions and professions are spiritual and divine, and his selfish and fleshly interest being predominant; it must needs follow that he estimateth all things principally as they respect his fleshly interest; and useth them principally for his carnal self; even when in the manner he seemeth to use them most religiously (as I have said before) And so to the defiled nothing is pure, *Rom.* 8. 5, 6, 7, 8, 13. *Tit.* 1. 15.

XXII. 1. A Christian indeed hath a promptitude to obey, and a ready compliance of his will to the will of God. He hath not any great averfeness and withdrawing, and doth not the good which he doth with much backwardness and striving against it: but as in a well ordered watch or clock, the spring or poise doe easily set all the wheels a going, and the first wheel easily moveth the rest; so is the will of a confirmed Christian presently moved, as soon as he knoweth the will of God. He stayeth not for other moving Reasons: Gods will is his Reason. This is the Habit of subjection and obedience: which makes him say, *Speak Lord for thy servant heareth:* and
Lord

Lord what wouldst thou have me do. And Teach me to do thy will O God: Psal. 143. 10. 1 Sam. 3. 10. Act. 9. 6. I delight to do thy will O God; yea thy Law is *within my heart*: Psal. 40. 8. The Law written in our heart, is nothing else but the knowledge of Gods Laws, with this *Habit* or *promptitude* to obey them; the special fruit of the spirit of grace.

2. But a *weak Christian*, though he love Gods will and way, and be *sincerely obedient* to him, yet in many particulars where his corruption contradicth, hath a great deal of *backwardness* and *striving* of the *flesh* against the *spirit*; and there needs many words and many considerations, and vehement perswasions, yea and sharp afflictions sometimes to bring him to obey: and he is said to *drive on* his backward heart, and hath frequent use for the *rod* and *spur*; and therefore is more slow and uneven in his obedience, Gal. 5. 17.

3. The *seeming Christian* is forward in those ealie cheaper parts of duty, which serve to delude his carnal heart, and quiet him in a worldly life; but he is so backward to *through sincere obedience* in the most *flesh-displeasing parts* of duty, that he is never brought to it at all; but either he will fit his opinions in religion to his will, and will not believe them to be duties, or else he will do something like them in a superficial formal way; but the thing it self he will not do. For he is more obedient to his carnal mind and lusts, than he is to God, Rom. 8. 6, 7. And forwarder much to sacrifice than obedience, Eccl. 5. 1.

XXIII. 1. A Christian indeed doth daily delight himself in God, and findeth more solid content and pleasure in his commands and promises, than
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in all this world : His *duties* are sweet to him, and his *hopes* are sweeter. Religion is not a tiresome task to him, The yoke of Christ is easie to him, and his burthen light, and his commandments are not grievous, *Psal.* 37. 4. & 1. 2. & 40. 3. & 94. 19. & 119. 16. 35. 47. 70. *Mat.* 11. 28, 29. *Job.* 5. 3. That which others take as Physick, for meer necessity, against their wills, he goeth to as a feast, with appetite and delight. He prayeth because he *loveth* to pray : and he thinks and speaks of holy things, because he *loveth* to do it. And hence it is that he is so much in holy dutie, and so unwearied, because he *loveth* it, and taketh pleasure in it. As voluptuous persons are oft, and long at their sports, or merry company, because they *love* them, and take pleasure in them : so are such Christians oft, and long in holy exercises because their hearts are set upon them, as their recreation and the way and means of their felicity. If it be a *delight* to a *studious* man, to read those books which most clearly open the abstrusest mysteries of the sciences; or to converse with the most wise and learned men, and if it be a delight to men, to converse with their dearest friends, or to hear from them and read their letters; no marvel if it be a delight to a *Christian* indeed to read the Gospel mysteries of Love, and to find there the promises of everlasting happiness, and to see in the face of Jesus Christ the clearest Image of the eternal deity : and foresee the Joyes which he shall have for ever. He sticketh not in superficial formalitie, but breaking the shell doth feed upon the kernell : It is not bare external duty which he is taken up with : nor any meer creature that is his content :

content : but it is God in creatures and ordinances that he seeketh and liveth upon : and therefore it is that Religion is so pleasant to him. He would not change his Heavenly delights , which he findeth in the exercise of faith, and hope, and love to God , for all the carnal pleasures of this world : he had rather be a door keeper in the house of God, than to dwell in the tents or palaces of wickedness : A day in Gods court is better to him than a thousand, in the court of the greatest Prince on earth. He is not a stranger to *the joy in the Holy Ghost*, in which the Kingdom of God doth in part consist, Rom. 14. 17. Psal. 84. 10. 2. & 65. 4. *In the multitude of his thoughts within him, the comforts of God do delight his soul.* Psal. 94. 19. *His meditation of God is sweet, and he is glad in the Lord.* Psal. 104. 34. The freest and sweetest of his thoughts and words, run out upon God and the matters of salvation. The word of God is sweeter to him than hony, and better than thousands of Gold and Silver : Psal. 119. 72. & 119. 103. & 19. 10. Prov. 16. 24. And because his delight is in the law of the Lord, therefore doth he meditate in it day and night. Psal. 1. 2. He seeth great reason for all those commands, *Rejoyce ever more :* 1 Thes. 5. 16. *Let the righteous be glad, let them rejoyce before God, yea let them exceedingly rejoyce.* Psal. 68. 3. 4. & 64. 10. & 31. 1. & 32. 11. *Be glad in the Lord and rejoyce ye righteous : and shout for joy all that are upright in heart.* He is sorry for the poor unhappy world, that have no better things than meat, and drink, and cloaths, and house, and land, and mony, and lust, and play, and domineering over others, to rejoyce in. And heartily he wisheth that they

they had but a taste of the Saints delights, that it might make them spit out their luscious, unclean, unwholesome pleasures: One look to Christ, one promise of the Gospel, one serious thought of the life which he must live with God for ever, doth afford his soul more solid comfort, than all the kingdoms on earth can afford. And though he live not continually in these high delights, yet peace with God, and peace of conscience, and some delight in God, and godliness, is the ordinary temperature of his soul, and higher degrees are given him in season for his cordials and his feasts.

2. But the *weak Christian* hath little of these spiritual delights: his ordinary temper is to apprehend that God and his ways are indeed most delectable: his very heart acknowledgeth that they are worthiest and fittest to be the matter of his delights: And if he could attain assurance of his special interest in the love of God; and his part in Christ and life eternal, he would then rejoyce in them indeed, and would be gladder than if he were Lord of all the world: But in the mean time, either his fears and doubts are damping his delights; or else (which is much worse) his appetite is dull, and God and holiness relish not with him half so sweetly, as they do with the confirmed Christian; and he is too busie in tasting of fleshly and forbidden pleasures, which yet more deprave his appetite, and dull his desires, to the things of God: so that though in his *Estimation*, *choice*, *resolution* and *endeavour* he much preferreth God before the world yet as to any delightful sweetness in him, it is but little that he tasteth. He loveth God with a *Desiring*
Love,

Love, and with a *Seeking Love*, but with very little of a *Delighting Love*. The remnant of corrupt and alien affections do weaken his affections to the things above; and his infant measure of spiritual life, conjunct with many troublesome diseases, allow him very little of the joy of the Holy Ghost. Nay perhaps he hath more grief, and fear, and doubts, and trouble, and perplexity of mind, than ever he had before he turned unto God: and perhaps he hath yet less pleasure in God, than he had before in sin and sensuality. Because he had his *sin* in a state of *fruition*, but he hath God only in a *seeking, hoping state*: he had the *best* of sin, and all that ever it will afford him: but he hath yet none of the full felicity which he expecteth in God: The *fruition* of him is yet but in the prospect of *hope*. His *sensual* sinfull life was in its maturity, and the *object present* in its most alluring state: but his spiritual life of faith and love, is but yet in its weak beginnings, and the *object* absent from our sight: He is so busie at first in blowing up his little spark, not knowing whether the fire will kindle or go out, that he hath little of the use or pleasure, either of its *light* or *warmth*. Infants come crying into the world; and afterwards oftner cry than laugh: Their senses and reason are not yet perfected, or exercised to partake of the *pleasures* of life. And when they do come to know what a laughter is, they will laugh and cry almost in a breath: And those *weak Christians* that do come to taste of joy and pleasure in their religious state, it is commonly but as a flash of lightning, which leaveth them as dark as they were before. Sometimes in the beginning, upon their first apprehensions of

of the love of God in Christ, and of the pardon of their sins, and the priviledges of their new condition, and the hopes of everlasting joy, their hearts are transported with unspeakable delight; which is partly from the *newness* of the thing, and partly because God will let them have some encouraging tast, to draw them further, and to convince them of the difference between the pleasures of sin, and the comforts of believing: But these first rejoycings soon abate, and turn into a life of doubts, and fears, and griefs, and care, till they are grown to greater understanding, experience, and settledness in the things of God: The *root* must grow greater and deeper, before it will bear a greater top. Those Christians that in the *weakness* of grace have frequent joys, are usually persons whose weak and passionate nature doth occasion it: (some women especially) that have strong phantasies and passions are alwaies passionately affected with whatsoever they apprehend: And these are like a ship that is tossed in a tempest; that is one while lifted up as to the clouds, and presently cast down as into an infernal gulf: There one day in great joy, and quickly after in as great perplexity and sorrow. Because their comforts or sorrows do follow their present *feeling*, or mutable apprehensions. But when they come to be *confirmed Christians*, they will keep a more constant judgement of themselves, and their own condition, and constantly see their grounds of comfort; and when they cannot raise their souls to any high and passionate joys, they yet walk in a settled peace of soul, and in such competent comforts, as make their lives to be easie and delightful; being well pleased

ed and contented with the happy condition that Christ hath brought them to, and thankful that he left them not in those foolish vain pernicious pleasures, which were the way to endless sorrows.

3. But the *seeming Christian* seeketh and taketh up his chief contentment in some carnal thing: If he be so poor and miserable as to have nothing in possession that can much delight him, he will hope for better dayes hereafter, and that hope shall be his chief delight: or if he have no such hope he will be *without delight*, and shew his love to the world and flesh, by mourning for that which he cannot have, as others do in rejoycing in what they do possess; and he will, in such a desperate case of misery, be such to the world as the weak Christian is to God, who hath a *mourning and desiring love*, when he cannot reach to an *enjoying and delighting Love*. His carnal mind most savoureth the things of the flesh, and therefore in them he findeth or seeketh his chief delights. Though yet he may have also a delight in his superficial kind of Religion, his hearing, and reading & praying & in his ill-grounded hopes of life eternal: But all this is but subordinate to his chiefest earthly pleasure. *Isai. 58. 2. Yet they seek me daily, and delights to know my waies, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching unto God.* And yet all this was subjected to a covetous oppressing mind. *Mat. 13. 20. He that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it, yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribu-*

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lation or persecution ariseth because of the word; by and by he is offended. Whereby it appeareth that his love to the word, was subjected to his love to the world.

Obj. But there are two sorts of people that seem to have no fleshly delights at all, and yet are not in the way to salvation: viz. the Quakers, and Bebménists that live in great austerity, and some of the Religious orders of the Papiſts, who afflict their flesh.

Ans. Some of them undergo their fastings and pennance for a day, that they may sin the more quietly all the week after: And some of them proudly comfort themselves with the fancies and conceit of being and appearing more excellent in austerity than others: And all these take up with a carnal sort of pleasure. As proud persons are pleased with their own, or others conceits of their beauty, or witt, or worldly greatness; so prouder persons are pleased with their own and others conceits of their holiness. And verily they have their reward, Mat. 6. 2. But those of them that place their chiefest happiness in the love of God, and the eternal fruition of him in heaven, and seek this sincerely according to their helps and power, though they are mislead into some superstitious errors, I hope I may number with those that are sincere; for all their errors and the ill effects of them.

XXIV. 1. A confirmed Christian doth ordinarily discern the sincerity of his own heart, and consequently hath some well grounded assurance of the pardon of his sins, and of the favour of God, and of his everlasting happiness: And therefore no wonder if he live a peaceable and joyfull life. For his grace is not so small as to be
undiscernable

undiscernable, nor is it as a sleepey buried seed or principle ; but it is almost in continual act : And they that have a great degree of grace, and also keep it in lively exercise, do seldom doubt of it. Besides that they blot not their Evidence by so many infirmities and falls : They are more in the light, and have more acquaintance with themselves, and more sense of the abundant love of God, and of his exceeding mercies, than weak Christians have : and therefore must needs have more assurance. They have boldness of access to the throne of grace, without unreverent contempt : *Eph. 3. 12. & 2. 18.* They have more of the spirit of Adoption, and therefore more child-like confidence in God, and can call him *Father* with greater freedom and comfort than any others can. *Rom. 8. 15, 16. Gal. 4. 6. Eph. 1. 6. 1 Joh. 5. 19, 20.* [*And we know that we are of God, and that the whole world lyeth in wickedness : &c.*

2. But the *weak Christian* hath so small a degree of grace, and so much corruption, and his grace is so little in act, and his sin so much, that he seldom if ever attaineth to any well-grounded assurance, till he attain to a greater measure of grace. He differeth so little from the *seeming Christian*, that neither himself nor others do certainly discern the difference. When he searcheth after the truth of his *faith*, and *love*, and *heavenly mindedness*, he findeth so much unbelief and averfness from God, and earthly mindedness, that he cannot be certain which of them is predominant ; and whether the interest of this world or that to come, do bear the sway. So that he is often in perplexities and fears, and more often in a dull uncertainty : And if he seem at any

time to have assurance, it is usually but an ill-grounded perswasion of the truth: though it be true which he apprehendeth, when he taketh himself to be the child of God, yet it is upon unsound reasons that he judgeth so, or else upon sound reasons weakly and uncertainly discerned: so that there is commonly much of *security*, presumption, fancie, or mistake, in his greatest comforts. He is not yet in a condition fit for full assurance, till his love and obedience be more full.

3. But the *seeming Christian* cannot possibly in that estate, have either certainty, or good probability that he is a child of God, because it is not true: His seeming certainty is meerly self-deceit, and his greatest confidence is but presumption, because the spirit of Christ is not within him, and therefore he is certainly none of his, *Rom. 8. 9.*

XXV. 1. The *Assurance* of a *confirmed Christian* doth increase his alacrity and diligence in duty, and is alwayes seen in his more obedient, holy, fruitful life: The sense of the love and mercy of God, is as the rain upon the tender grass. He is never so fruitful, so thankful, so heavenly, as when he hath the greatest certainty that he shall be saved: The Love of God is then shed abroad upon his heart by the Holy Ghost, which maketh him abound in love to God, *Rom. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4.* He is the more stedfast, unmoveable and alwaies, abounding in the work of the Lord, when he is most certain that his labour shall not be in vain in the Lord, *1 Cor. 15. 58.*

2. But the *weak Christian* is unfit yet to manage assurance well: and therefore it is that it is not given him:

him: Graces must grow proportionably together. If he be but confidently perswaded that he is justified and shall be saved, he is very apt to gather some consequence from it, that tendeth to security and to the remitting of his watchfulness and care: He is ready to be the bolder with sin, and stretch his conscience, and omit some duties, and take more fleshly liberty and ease, and think, Now I am a child of God, I am out of danger, I am sure I cannot totally fall away: And though his judgement conclude not [*therefore I may venture further upon worldly fleshly pleasures, and need not be so strict and diligent as I was*] yet his heart and practice thus conclude. And he is most obedient when he is most in fear of hell, and he is worst in his heart and life, when he is most confident that all his danger is past. *Heb. 4. 1, 2. & 3. 14, 15. 16.*

3. But the *seeming Christian*, though he have no assurance, is hardened in his carnal state by his presumption. Had he but assurance to be saved without a holy life, he would cast off that very image of godliness which he yet retaineth. The conceit of his own sincerity and salvation, is that which deludeth and undoeth him. What sin would not gain or pleasure draw him to commit, if he were but sure to be forgiven? It is fear of hell that causeth that seeming religion which he hath: And therefore if that fear be gone, all is gone; and all his piety and diligence and righteousness is come to nought: *Gal. 6. 3. Joh. 8. 39, 42, 44.*

XXVI. 1. For all his assurance, a *confirmed Christian* is so well acquainted with his manifold imperfections, and daily failings, and great

unworthiness, that he is very *low and vile* in his *own eyes*; and therefore can easily endure to be *low and vile* in the eyes of *others*: He hath a constant sense of the burden of his remaining sin: Especially he doth even abhor himself, when he findeth the averfeness of his heart to God, and how little he knoweth of him, and how little he loveth him, in comparison of what he ought, and how little of Heaven is upon his heart, and how strange and backward his thoughts are to the life to come. These are as fetters upon his soul: He daily groaneth under them as a captive, that he should be yet so carnal, and unable to shake off the remnant of his infirmities, as if he were *fold under sin*, that is, in bondage to it, *Rom. 7. 14.* He hateth himself more for the imperfections of his love and obedience to God, than hypocrites do for their reigning sin. And O how he longeth for the day of his deliverance! *Rom. 7. 24.* He thinketh it no great injury for another to judge of him as he judgeth of himself, even to be less than the least of all Gods mercies: He is more troubled for being over praised and overvalued, than for being dispraised and vilified; as thinking those that praise him are more mistaken, and lay the more dangerous snare for his soul. For he hath a special antipathy to pride: and wondreth that any rational man can be so blind as not to see enough to humble him: For his own part (in the midst of all Gods graces) he seeth in himself so much darkness, imperfection, corruption, and want of further grace, that he is loathsome and burdensome continually to himself: If you see him sad or troubled, and ask him the cause, it is ten to one but it is *himself*

self that he complaineth of: The frowardeſt wiſe, the moſt undutiful child, the moſt diſobedient ſervant, the moſt injurious neighbour, the moſt malicious enemy, is not half ſo great a trouble to him as he is to himſelf. He prayeth abundantly more againſt his own corruption, than againſt any of theſe. O could he but *know* and *love* God more, and be more in heaven, and willing to die, and free from his own diſtempers, how eaſily could he bear all croſſes, or injuries from others? He came to Chriſts ſchool as a little child, *Mat.* 18. 3. And ſtill he is little in his own eſteem: And therefore diſeſteem and contempt from others, is no great matter with him. He thinks it can be no great wrong, that is done againſt ſo poor a worm, and ſo unworthy a ſinner as himſelf (except as God or the ſouls of men may be intereſted in the cauſe.) He heartily approveth of the juſtice of God, in abhorring the proud; and hath learned that *Rom.* 12. 10. [*in honour preferring one another*] and *Gal.* 5. 26. *Let us not be deſirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.*

2. But the remnant of *Pride* is uſually the moſt notable ſin, of the *weak Chriſtian*; Though it reigneth not, it ſouly blemiſheth him. He would fain be taken for ſome body in the Church: He is ready to ſtep up into a higher room, and to think himſelf wiſer and better than he is. If he can but ſpeak confidently of the principles of Religion, and ſome few controversies which he hath made himſelf ſick with, he is ready to think himſelf fit to be a preacher. He looketh through a magnifying glaſs upon all his own performances and gifts: He loveth to be valued and praised:

He can hardly bear to be slighted and dispraised, but is ready to think hardly of those that do it, if not to hate them in some degree. He loveth not to be found fault with, though it be necessary to his amendment. And though all this vice of pride be not so predominant in him, as to conquer his humility, yet doth it much obscure and interrupt it: And though he *hate* this his pride and strive against it, and lamenteth it before God, yet still it is the forest ulcer in his soul: And should it prevail and overcome him, he would be abhorred of God, and it would be his ruine. 2 *Chro.* 16. 10, 12. *Luk.* 22. 24, 25, 26.

3. But in the *Hypocrite Pride* is the reigning sin: The praise of men is the aire which he liveth in: He was never well acquainted with himself; and never felt aright the burden of his sins and wants; and therefore cannot bear contempt from others: Indeed if his corrupt disposition turn most to the way of covetousness, tyranny, or lust, he can the easier bear contempt from others, as long, as he hath his will at home; and he can spare their love, if he can be but feared and domineer. But still his Pride is predominant; and when it affecteth not much the reputation of *goodness*, it affecteth the name of being *rich* or *great*. Sin may make him fordid, but grace doth not make him humble. Pride is the vital spirit of the corrupted state of man.

XXVII. 1. A *confirmed Christian* is acquainted with the deceitfulness of mans heart, and the particular corrupt inclinations that are in it; and especially with his own; and he is acquainted with the wiles and methods of the tempter, and what are the materials which he maketh his baits

baits of, and what is the manner in which he spreadeth his nets: He seeth alwaies some snares before him: And what company soever he is in, or what business soever he is about, he walketh as among snares, which are visible to his sight: And it is part of his business continually to avoid them. He liveth in a continual watch, and warfare. He can resist much stronger and subtil temptations, than the weak can do. He is all-ways armed, and knoweth what are the special remedies, against each particular snare and sin. *Eph. 6. 2 Cor. 2. 11. Prov. 1. 17.* And he carrieth always his antidotes about him, as one that liveth in an infectious world, and in the midst of a forward and perverse generation, from which he is charged to save himself. *Phil. 2. 15. Act. 2. 40.*

2. And the *weak Christian* is a souldier in the army of Christ, and is engaged in striving against sin, *Heb. 12. 4.* And really taketh the flesh and world, as well as the Devil, to be his enemies, and doth not only *strive*, but *conquer* in the main: But yet alas, how poorly is he armed? How unskillfully doth he manage his Christian armour? How often is he soiled and wounded? How many a temptation is he much unacquainted with? And how many a snare doth lie before him which he never did observe? And oft he is overcome in particular temptations, when he never perceiveth it, but thinks that he hath conquered.

3. But the *Hypocrite* is fast ensnared when he gloryeth most of his integrity, and is deceived by his own heart, and thinketh he is something, when he is nothing, *Gal. 6. 3. Luk. 18. 10, 21, 22, 23.* When he is thanking God that he is not as
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other men, he is rejoycing in his dreams, and sacrificing for the victory which he never obtained. *Luk. 18. 11.* He is led by Satan captive at his will, when he is boasting of his uprightness; and hath a beam of covetousness, or pride, or cruelty in his own eye, while he is reviling, or censuring another for the mote of some difference about a ceremony, or tolerable opinion. And usually such grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. *Mat. 7. 3, 4, 5. 2 Tim. 3. 13.*

XXVIII. 1. A Christian indeed, is one that hath deliberately counted, what it may cost him to follow Christ and to save his soul; and knowing that *suffering with Christ* is the way to our reigning with him, he hath fully consented to the terms of Christ: He hath read *Luk. 14. 26, 27, 33.* and findeth that *bearing the Cross and forsaking all*, is necessary to those that will be Christs disciples: And accordingly in resolution he hath *forsaken all*; and looketh not for a smooth and ealie way to heaven: He considereth that *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution*, and that *through many tribulations we must enter into heaven*: And therefore he taketh it not for a strange or unexpected thing, if the fiery trial come upon him. He doth not wonder at the unrighteousness of the world, as if he expected reason, or honesty, justice, or truth, or mercy in the enemies of Christ, and the instruments of Satan: He will not bring his action against the Devil, for unjust afflicting him. He will rather *turn the other cheek to him* that smiteth him, than he will hinder the good of any soul by seeking right; much less will he exercise unjust revenge. Though where government is exercised for truth and righteousness, he will

will not refuse to make use of the justice of it to punish iniquity, and discourage evil doers, yet this is for God and the common good, and for the suppression of sin, much more than for himself. Suffering doth not surprise him as a thing unlooked for: He hath been long preparing for it, and it findeth him garrison'd in the love of Christ: Yea (though his flesh will be as the flesh of others, sensible of the smart, and his mind is not senseless of the sufferings of his body, yet) it is some pleasure and satisfaction to his soul, to find himself in the common way to heaven, and to see the predictions of Christ fulfilled, and to feel himself so far conform to Jesus Christ his head, and to trace the footsteps of a humbled Redeemer in the way before him: As Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, so doth the Christian arm himself with the same mind. 1 Pet. 4. 1. He rejoiceth that he is made partaker of the sufferings of Christ, that when his glory shall be revealed, he may also be partaker of the exceeding joy. 1 Pet. 4. 12, 13. yea he taketh the reproach of Christ for a treasure, yea a greater treasure than Riches, or mens favours can afford, Heb. 11. 25, 26. For he knoweth if he be reproached for the name or sake of Christ he is happy: For thereby he glorifieth that God whom the enemy doth blaspheme, and so the spirit of God, and of glory resteth on him, 1 Pet. 4. 14. He liveth and suffereth as one that from his heart believeth, that they are blessed that are persecuted for righteousness sake, for great is their reward in heaven. And they are blessed when men shall revile them and persecute them, and say all manner of evil against them falsely for Christs sake: In this they Rejoice and are exceeding glad, as knowing that herein they are followers of them

them who through faith and patience inherit the promise, Mat. 5. 10, 11, 12. Heb. 6. 12. If he be offered upon the sacrifice and service of the saints of Gods elect, he can rejoyce in it as having greater good than evil, Phil. 2. 17. He can suffer the loss of all things, and account them *dung* that he may win Christ, and be found in him, and know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death. Phil. 3. 8, 9, 10. Not out of surliness and pride doth he rejoyce in sufferings; (as some do, that they may carry the reputation of holy and undaunted men; and seem to be far better and constanter than others.) When pride maketh men suffer, they are partly the Devils martyrs, though the cause be never so good; Though it is much more ordinary for pride to make men suffer rejoycingly in an ill cause than in a good; the Devil having more power on his own ground than on Christs. But it is the Love of Christ, and the belief of the reward, and the humble neglect of the mortified flesh, and the contempt of the conquered world, that maketh the Christian suffer with so much joy. For he seeth that the Judge is at the door: And what torments the wicked are preparing for themselves: And that as certainly as there is a God that governeth the world, and that in Righteousness, so certainly are his eyes upon the Righteous, and his face is set against them that do evil: 1 Pet. 3. 12: and though sinners do evil an hundred times and scape unpunished till their dayes be prolonged, yet vengeance will overtake them in due time, and it shall be well with them that fear the Lord; and that he keepeth all the tears of his servants till the reckoning day: And
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if judgement begin at the house of God, and the righteous be saved through so much suffering and labour, what then shall be their end that obey not the Gospel? and where shall the ungodly and sinner appear. 1 Pet. 4. 17, 18. Eccl. 8. 12. Prov. 11. 31. & 13. 6. Psal. 56. 8. Dent. 32. 35. Jam. 5. 9,

2. And the *weak Christian* is one that will forsake all for the sake of Christ, and suffer with him that he may be glorified with him, and will take his treasure in heaven for all: Luk. 14. 26, 33. Luk. 18. 22. But he doth it not with that easiness, and alacrity, and joy as the confirmed Christian doth. He hearkens more to the flesh which saith, *favour thy self*: suffering is much more grievous to him: And sometimes he is wavering before he can bring himself fully to resolve, and let go all. Mat. 16. 22.

3. But the *seeming Christian* looketh not for much suffering: He reads of it in the Gospel, but he saw no probability of it, and never believed that he should be called to it in any notable degree: He thought it probable that he might well escape it: And therefore though he agreed verbally to take Christ for *better* and *worse*, and to follow him through sufferings, he thought he would never put him to it. And indeed his heart is secretly resolved, that he will never be *undone in the world* for Christ: Some reparable loss he may undergo, but he will not let go life and all. He will still be religious and hope for heaven: But he will make himself believe (and others if he can) that the Truth lieth on the safer side, and not on the suffering side; and that it is but for their own conceits and scrupulosity that other men suffer who go beyond him; and that many good men are of his opinion,

opinion, and therefore he may be good also in the same opinion (though he would never have been of that opinion, if it had not been necessary to his escaping of sufferings) what flourish soever he maketh for a time, *when persecution ariseth he is offended and withereth.* Mat. 13. 21, 6. Unless he be so deeply engaged among the suffering party, that he cannot come off without perpetual reproach, and then perhaps *Pride* will make him suffer more, than the belief of heaven or the love of Christ could do: And all this is because his very *belief* is unrooted and unsound, and he hath secretly at the heart a fear that if he should suffer death for Christ, he should be a loser by him, and he would not reward him according to his promise, with everlasting life. Heb. 3. 12.

XXIX. 1. *A Christian indeed* is one that followeth not Christ for company, nor holdeth his belief in trust upon the credit of any in the world, and therefore he would *stick to Christ, if all that be knoweth or converseth with should forsake him.* If the Rulers of the Earth should change their religion, and turn against Christ, he would not forsake him: If the multitude of the people turn against him; nay if the professors of Godliness should fall off, yet would he stand his ground and be still the same: If the learnedest men, and the Pastors of the Church should turn from Christ, he would not forsake him: Yea if his nearest relations and friends, or even that Minister that was the means of his conversion, should change their minds and forsake the truth, and turn from Christ or a holy life, he would yet be constant and be still the same: And what *Peter* resolved on, he would truly practise, Mat. 26. 33, 35. *Though all men should*

should be offended because of thee, yet would not I be offended: Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. And if he thought himself as Elias did, left alone, yet would he not bow the knee to Baal Rom. 11. 3. If he hear that this eminent Minister falleth off one day, and the other another day, till all be gone, yet still the foundation of God standeth sure; he falleth not because he is built upon the rock, Mat. 7. 22, 23. His heart saith; Alas, whither shall I go, if I go from Christ? Is there any other that hath the word and spirit of eternal life? Can I be a gainer if I lose my soul? Job. 6. 67, 68. Mat. 16. 26. He useth his Teachers to bring him that light and evidence of truth, which dwelleth in him when they are gone: And therefore though they fall away, he falleth not with them.

2. And the *weakest Christian* believeth with a Divine faith of his own, and dependeth more on God than man: But yet if he should be put to so great a tryal, as to see all the Pastors and Christians that he knoweth change their minds, I know not what he would do: For though God will uphold all his own whom he will save, yet he doth it by *means* and *outward helps*, together with his internal grace; and keepeth them from temptations, when he will deliver them from the evil: And therefore it is a doubt whether there be not degrees of grace so weak, as would fail in case the strongest temptations were permitted to assault them. A strong man can stand and go of himself; but an infant must be carried; and the lame and sick must have others to support them. The weak Christian falleth if his Teacher or most esteemed company fall: If they run into
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an error, sect, or schisme, he keeps them company. He groweth cold, if he have not warming company: He forgetteth himself, and letteth loose his sense and passion, if he have not some to watch over him, and warn him: No man should refuse the help of others, that can have it; and the best have need of all Gods means: But the *weak Christian* needeth them much more than the strong, and is much less able to stand without them. *Luk. 22. 32. Gal. 2. 11, 12, 13, 14.*

3. But the *seeming Christian* is built upon the sand, and therefore cannot stand a storm: He is a Christian more for company, or the credit of man, or the interest that others have in him, or the encouragement of the times, than from a firm Belief and love of Christ: and therefore falleth when his props are gone: *Mat. 7. 24.*

XXX. 1. *A strong Christian can digest the hardest Truths, and the hardest works of Providence.* He seeth more of the reason and evidence of truths than others: And he hath usually a more comprehensive knowledge, and can reconcile those truths which short lighted persons suspect to be inconsistent and contradictory: And when he cannot reconcile them, he knoweth they are reconcilable: For he hath laid his foundation well, and then he reduceth other truths to that, and buildeth them on it. And so he doth by the *hardest Providences*: Whoever is high or low, whoever prospereth or is afflicted, however humane affairs are carried, and all things seem to go against the Church and cause of Christ; he knoweth yet that God is good to Israel, *Psal. 73. 1, 2.* and that he is the righteous Judge of all the earth, and that the righteous shall have dominion in the morning, and it shall go well

well with them that fear the Lord: For he goeth into the Sanctuary, and foreseeeth the end. Eccl. 8. 11, 12, 13. Psal. 73. 17. Psal. 115. 11, 13. and 31. 19.

2. But the *weak Christian* is very hard put to it, when he meeteth with difficult passages of Scripture, and when he seeth it go *with the righteous according to the work of the wicked, and with the wicked according to the work of the righteous*, Eccl. 8. 14. Though he is not over-turned by such difficulties, yet his foot is ready to slip, and he diggesth them with much perplexity and trouble.

3. But the *seeming unsettled Christian* is often overcome by them, and turneth away from Christ, and faith, These are hard sayings, or hard Providences, who can bear them, *Job. 6. 60. 66.* And thus unbelief thence gathereth matter for its increase.

XXXI. 1. A *Christian indeed* is one that can exercise all Gods graces in conjunction, and in their proper places and proportion, without setting one against another, or neglecting one while he is exercising another. He can be *humbled* without hindering his *thankfulness* and *joy*; and he can be *thankfull* and *joyfull* without hindering his due *humility*. His *knowledge* doth not destroy but quicken his *zeal*: His *wisdom* hindereth not, but furthereth his *innocency*. His *faith* is a help to his *repentance*, and his *repentance* to his *faith*. His *love to himself* doth not hinder but help his *love to others*: and his *Love to God* is the end of both. He can mourn for the sins of the times, and the calamities of the Church, yea for his own sins and imperfections, and yet rejoyce for the mercies which he hath in possession or in hope. He findeth that piety and charity are

necessarily conjunct; and every grace and duty is a help to all the rest. Yea he can exercise his Graces methodically, which is the comeliness and beauty of his heart and life. 1 *Theff.* 5. 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. 1 *Pet.* 2. 17.

2. But the *weak Christian*, though he have every Grace, and his Obedience is universal, yet can he hardly set himself to any duty, but it hindereth him from some other duty, through the narrowness and weakness of his mind. When he is humbling himself in confession of sin, he can scarce be lively in thankfulness for mercy: When he rejoiceth it hindereth his humiliation. He can hardly do one duty without omitting or hindering another. He is either all for joy, or all for sorrow; all for love or all for fear; and cannot well do many things at once, but is apt to separate the *Truths* and *Duties* which God hath inseparably conjoined.

And for the *seeming Christian*, he exerciseth no grace in sincerity, nor is he universal in his Obedience to God; Though he may have the image of every Grace and Duty.

XXXII. 1. A *Christian* indeed is more in getting and using his Graces, than in enquiring whether he have them. He is very desirous to be assured that he is sincere; but he is more desirous to be so: And he knoweth that even assurance is got more by the exercise and increase of Grace than by bare enquiry whether we have it already; Not that he is a neglecter of self-examination: But he oftener asketh, *What shall I do to be saved?* than, *How shall I know that I shall be saved?*

2. But the *weak Christian* hath more of self, and less of God in his solicitousness: And though he
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be willing to obey the whole Law of Christ, yet he is much more solicitous to know that he is out of danger, and shall be saved, than to be fully pleasing unto God. And therefore proportionably, he is more in enquiring by what *marks* he may know that he shall be saved, than by what *means* he may attain more holyness, and what *diligence* is necessary to his salvation.

3. But the *seeming Christian* is most carefull how to prosper in the World, or please his flesh? and next, how he may be sure to escape damnation when he hath done; and least of all how he may be conform to Christ in holyness.

XXXIII. 1. *A Christian indeed* doth study *Duty more than Events*: and is more carefull what he shall be towards God, than what he shall have from God in this life. He looketh to his *own part*, more than unto Gods; as knowing that it is he that is like to fail; but God will never fail of his part. He is much more suspicious of himself than of God. And when any thing goeth amiss, he blameth himself, and not Gods Providence; he knoweth that the hairs of his head are numbred, and that his Father knoweth what he needeth; and that God is infinitely wiser and fitter to dispose of him than he is to choose for himself: and that God loveth him better than he can love himself: And therefore he thankfully accepteth that easie, indulgent command; *Cast all your care on him, for he careth for you: Take no thought what you shall eat or drink, or wherewith you shall be clothed.* Heb. 12. 15. & 13. 5. Job 1. 21, 22. Mat. 10. 30. & 6. 25, 31, 32. 1 Pet. 5. 7.

2. But alas, how guilty is the *weak Christian* of meddling with Gods part of the work, How sin-

carefull what will become of him, and of his Family and Affairs, and of the Church, as if he were afraid lest God would prove forgetfull, unfaithfull, or insufficient for his work : so imperfect is his Trust in God.

3. And the *seeming Christian* really trusteth him not at all, for any thing that he can trust himself or the Creature for : He will have two strings to his bow if he can ; but it is in man that he placeth his greatest trust for any thing that man can do. Indeed to save his Soul he knoweth none but God is to be trusted, and therefore his life is still preferred before his Soul, and consequently man whom he trusteth most with his life and prosperity, is really trusted before God, however God may have the Name. *Jer.* 17. 5, 7. *Psal.* 34. 8. & 20. 7. & 34. 22. & 37. 3.

XXXIV. 1. A *Christian* indeed is much more studious of his *own duty towards others*, than of *theirs* to him : He is much more fearfull of *doing wrong*, than of receiving wrong. He is more troubled if he say ill of others, than if others speak ill of him. He had farre rather be slandered himself, than slander others ; or be censured himself than censure others ; or be unjustly hurt himself, than unjustly hurt another ; or to be put out of his own possessions or right, than to put another out of his. He is oftner and sharper in judging and reproving himself than others : he falleth out with himself more frequently than with others : and is more troubled with himself than with all the world besides : he taketh *himself* for his greatest enemy, and knoweth that his danger is most at home ; and that if he can escape but from *himself*, no one in Earth or Hell can undo him. He is more carefull of his duty to his Prince, his Parents, his
Pastor,

Pastor, or his Master, than of theirs to him : he is much more unwilling to be disobedient to them in any lawfull thing, or to dishonour them, than to be oppressed or unjustly afflicted or abused by them. And all this is, because he knoweth that *sin* is worse than present suffering; and that he is not to answer for other mens sins but for his own : nor shall he be condemned for the sins of any but himself : And that many millions are condemned for wronging others, but no one for being wronged by others. 1 Pet. 4. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. Matth. 5. 10, 11, 12. 1 Pet. 2. 13, 15, 16, 17.

2. And the *weak Christian* is of the same mind in the main; but with so much imperfection, that he is much more frequent in censuring others, and complaining of their wrongs, and finding fault with them, and aggravating all that is said or done against himself, when he is hardly made so sensible of as great miscarriages in himself, as having much more uncharitableness, partiality, and selfishness, than a confirmed Christian hath. There are few things which weakness of Grace doth more ordinarily appear in, than this partiality and selfishness, in judging of the *faults* or *duties* of others, and of his own. How apt are (not only Hypocrites, but) weak Christians, to aggravate all that is done *against them*? and to extenuate or justify all that *they* do against another? O what a noyse they make of it, if they think that any one hath wronged them? defamed them? disparaged them? or incroached on their right? If God himself be blasphemed or abused, they can more patiently bear it, and make not so great a matter of it. Who heareth of such angry complaints on Gods behalf, as on mens own? Of such passionate

inveſtives, ſuch ſharp prosecutions, againſt thoſe that wrong both God, and mens Souls, as againſt thoſe that wrong a ſelfiſh perſon; (And uſually every man ſeemeth to wrong him, who keepeth from him any thing which he would have, or ſaith any thing of him which is diſpleaſing to him.) Go to the Aſſizes and Courts of Juſtice; look into the Priſons, and enquire whether it be Zeal for God, or for mens ſelves, which is the Plaintiff and Proſecutor? and whether it be for wronging God or them, that all the ſtirre is made? Men are ready to ſay, God is ſufficient to right himſelf: As if he were not the Original and the End of Laws and Government, and Magiſtrates were not his Officers, to promote obedience to Him in the World.

At this time how univerſal is mens complaint againſt their Governours! how common are the cries of the poor and ſufferers, of the greatneſs of their burdens, miſeries and wants. But how few lament the ſins againſt Government, which this Land hath been ſadly guilty of? The Paſtors complain of the Peoples contempt: The People complain of the Paſtors inſufficiency and lives: The Maſter complaineth how hard it is to get good Servants, that will mind their buſineſs and profit, as if it were their own: Servants complain of their Maſters for over-labouring them, or uſing them too hardly. Landlords ſay that their Tenants cheat them: And Tenants ſay, that their Landlords oppreſs and grind them. But if you were Chriſtians indeed, the commonest and ſaddeſt complaints would be againſt *your ſelves*: I am not ſo good a Ruler, ſo peaceable a Subject, ſo good a Landlord, ſo good a Tenant, ſo good a Maſter,

Master, so good a Servant, as I ought to be. Your Rulers sin, your Subjects sin, your Landlords sin, your Tenants sin, your Masters sin, your Servants sin, shall not be charged upon you in Judgement, nor condemn you, but your *own* sin. How much more therefore should you *fear*, and *feel*, and *complain* of your own, than of theirs.

3. As for the *seeming Christian*, I have told you already that *selfishness* is his nature and predominant constitution: And according to *self-interest* he judgeth of almost all things: of the faults, and duties of others and himself: And therefore no man seemeth honest or innocent to him, who displeaseth him, and is against his worldly interest: Cross him about *Mine* and *Thine*, and he will beknave the honestest man alive, and call his ancient friend his enemy. But of his dealings with them, he is not so scrupulous, nor so censorious of himself.

XXXV. 1. A *Christian indeed* is much taken up in the Government of his *Thoughts*; and hath them so much ordinarily in obedience, that God and his service, and the matters of his salvation have that precedency in them; and his eye is fixed on his *end* and *duty*: And his thoughts refuse not to serve him for any work of God to which he calleth them. He suffereth them not to be the in-lets or agents for Pride, or Lust, or Envy, or Voluptuousness, or to contrive iniquity: But if any such sparks from Hell are cast into his thoughts, he presently laboureth to extinguish them: If they intrude, he letteth them not lodge or dwell there. And though he cannot keep out all disorder or vanity, or inordinate delights; yet

is it his endeavour, and he leaveth not his heart in any thing to it self.

2. The *weak Christian* also maketh conscience of his thoughts, and alloweth them not to be the in-lets or servants of any reigning sin: But alas how imperfectly doth he govern them? what a deal of vanity and confusion is in them? how carelessly doth he watch them? how remissly doth he rebuke them, excite them and command them? how oft are they defiled with impurity and uncharitableness? And how little doth he repent of this, or endeavour to reform it? And little serviceable are his thoughts, to any high and heavenly work, in comparison of the confirmed Christian.

3. And the *seeming Christian* is very little employed about his Thoughts; but leaveth them to be the servants of his pride and worldyness or sensuality, or some reigning sin. *Psal.* 10. 4. *Matth.* 15. 19. *1 Cor.* 3. 20. *Isa.* 55. 7. *Jer.* 4. 14. and 6. 19.

XXXVI. 1. A *Christian* indeed is much employed in the Government of his *passions*: and hath so far mastered them, as that they prevail not to pervert his Judgement, nor to discompose his heart so farre as to interrupt much his communion with God, nor to ensnare his heart to any Creature, nor to breed any fixed uncharitableness or malice in him, nor to cause his tongue to speak things injurious to God or Man, to curse or swear, or rail, or lie: nor yet to cause him to hurt and injure any in his heart. But when passion would be inordinate, either in delights or desires, or anger, or grief, or fear or hope, he flyeth to his helps to suppress and govern them. (Though
fear

fear is more out of mans power than the rest, and therefore ordinarily hath less of sin). He knoweth that Christ hath blessed the meek, *Matth.* 5. 5. and bid us learn of him to be meek and lowly, *Matth.* 11. 28, 29. And that a meek and quiet spirit is in the sight of God of great price, *1 Pet.* 3. 4. It is therefore his care and course to give place to wrath, when others are angry, *Rom.* 12. 18, 19. and if it be possible as much as in him lyeth to live peaceably with all men: Yea to follow peace when it flyeth from him, *Heb.* 12. 14. And not when he is reviled to revile again; nor to threaten or revenge himself on them that injure him: *1 Pet.* 2. 21, 22, 23, 24. Reason and Charity hold the reins, and passion is kept under: Yea, it is used holily for God; *Eph.* 4. 26. Slow to anger he is in his own cause, and watchfull over his anger even in Gods cause. *Prov.* 15. 18. and 16. 32. *Eph.* 4. 31. *Col.* 3. 8.

2. But the weak Christian doth greatly shew his weakness, in his unruly passions, (if he have a temper of body disposed to passion): They are oft rising, and not easily kept under: Yea and too often prevail for such unseemly words, as maketh him become a dishonour to his profession. Oft he resolveth, and promiseth and prayeth for help; and yet the next provocation sheweth how little Grace he hath to hold the reins. And his passionate Desires, and Delights, and Love and Sorrows, are oft as unruly as his anger, to the further weakning of his Soul. They are like Ague fits that leave the health impaired.

3. And the seeming Christian hath much less power over those Passions, which must subserve his carnal minde. For Anger it dependeth much upon

upon the temperature of the *body*: and if that incline him not strongly to it, his credit or common discretion may suppress it: Unless you touch his chiefest *carnal interest*; and then he will not only be *angry* but *cruel*, *malicious*, and *revengesfull*: But his *carnal Love*, and *Desire* and *Delights* which are placed upon that pleasure, or profit, or honour, which is his *Idol*, are indeed the *reigning* passions in him: and his grief, and fear and anger are but the servants unto these. *Act.* 24. 26, 27.

XXXVII. 1. A *Christian* indeed is one that keepeth a constant *Government* of his *Tongue*: He knoweth how much *duty* or *sin* it will be the instrument of: According to his ability and opportunity he useth it to the service and honour of his Creator: In speaking of his Excellencies, his Works and Word: inquiring after the knowledge of him and his will: instructing others, and pleading for the Truth and wayes of God, and rebuking the impiety and iniquities of the world, as his place and calling doth allow him: He bridleth his *Tongue* from uttering vanity, filthiness, ribbaldry, foolish and uncomely talk and jests; from rash and unreverent talk of God, and taking of his Name in vain; from the venting of undigested and uncertain doctrines, which may prove erroneous, and perillous to mens souls: from speaking imprudently, unhandsonly, or unseasonably about holy things, so as to expose them to contempt and scorn: from lying, censuring others without a warrantable ground and call; from backbiting, slandering, false accusing, railing and reviling, malicious, envious, injurious speech, which tendeth to extinguish the love of the hearers

to those he speaketh of: from proud and boasting speeches of himself; much more from swearing, cursing, and blasphemous speech, and opposition to the Truths and holy wayes of God, or opprobrious speeches, or derision of his servants. And in the Government of his Tongue, he alwayes beginneth with his heart; that he may understand and love the good which he speaketh of, and may hate the evil which his tongue forbeareth; and not hypocritically to force his tongue against or without his heart: His tongue doth not run before his heart, but is ruled by it. *Eph.* 4. 15. 31. 29. and 5. 3. 4. 6. *Psal.* 37. 30. & 15. 2, 3. *Prov.* 16. 13. and 10. 20. & 21. 23. & 18. 21. & 15. 2. 4. *Psal.* 34. 13. *Prov.* 25. 15, 23. & 28. 23. *Matth.* 12. 31, 32, 34.

2. But the *weak Christian*, though his tongue be sincerely subject to the Laws of God, yet frequently miscarryeth, and blemisheth his Soul by the words of his lips; being much oftner than the confirmed Christian overtaken with words of vanity, meddling, folly, imprudence, uncharitableness, wrath, boasting, venting uncertain or erroneous opinions, &c. so that the unruliness of his tongue is the trouble of his heart, if not also of the Family, and all about him.

3. The *seeming Christian* useth his tongue in the service of his carnal ends, and therefore alloweth it so much unjustice, uncharitableness, falshood, and other sins; as his *carnal interest* and designs require: But the rest perhaps he may suppress, especially if natural sobriety, good education and prudence do assist him: And his tongue is alwayes better than his heart. *Pro.* 10. 32. & 19. 5. 9. *Pf.* 50. 20. & 12. 3. & 144. 8. & 120. 2, 3. *Prov.* 21. 6. 23.

XXXVIII. 1. The Religious discourse of a confirmed Christian is most about the greatest and most necessary matters: Heart-work and heaven-work are the usual employment of his *Tongue* and *Thoughts*: unprofitable Controversies, and hurtfull wranglings he abhorreth: And profitable Controversies he manageth sparingly, seasonably, charitably, peaceably, and with caution and sobriety, as knowing that the *servant of the Lord must not strive*, and that strife of words perverteth the hearers, and hindereth edifying. 1 Tim. 6. 4, 5, 6. and 4. 7, 8. 2 Tim. 2. 14, 15, 16, 17, 24, 25. His ordinary discourse is about the Glorious Excellencies, Attributes, Relations, and works of God; and the Myserie of Redemption, the Person, Office, Covenant and Grace of Christ; the renewing, illuminating, sanctifying works of the Holy Ghost; the Mercies of this life, and that to come: the Duty of Man to God as his Creator, Redeemer, and Regenerater: the corruption and deceitfulness of the Heart; the methods of the Tempter; the danger of particular Temptations; and the means of our escape, and of our growth in Grace; and how to be profitable to others; and especially to the Church. And if he be called to open any Truth which others understand not, he doth it not proudly to set up himself as the Master of a Sect, or to draw Disciples after him, nor make divisions about it in the Church; but soberly to the edification of the weak: And though he be ready to defend the Truth against perverse gainstayers in due season, yet doth he not turn his ordinary edifying discourse into Disputes or talk of Controversies; nor hath such a proud pugnacious Soul, as to assault every one that he thinks

erroneous,

erroneous, as a man that taketh himself for the great champion of the truth.

2. But the *weak Christian* hath a more unfruitful wandering tongue: And his religious discourse is most about his opinions or party, or some external thing: As which is the best preacher, or person, or book: or if he talk of any text of scripture, or doctrine of Religion, it is much of the *outside* of it; and his discourse is less feeling, lively and experimental: yea many a time he hindereth the more edifying savoury discourse of others, by such religious discourse as is imprudent, impertinent, or turneth them away from the heart and life of the matter in hand. But especially his *opinions*, and *distinct manner of worship*, are the chief of his discourse,

3. And for the *seeming Christian*, though he can affectedly force his tongue to talk of any subject in religion, especially that which he thinks will most honour him in the esteem of the hearers; yet when he speaketh according to the inclination of his heart, his discourse is first about his fleshly interest and concerns, and next to that of the meer externals of religion, as controversies, parties, and the severall modes of worship.

XXXIX. 1. *A Christian indeed* is one that so liveth upon the great substantial matters of Religion, as yet not willingly to commit the smallest sin, nor to own the smallest falsehood, nor to renounce or betray the smallest holy truth or duty, for any price that man can offer him. The works of Repentance, Faith and Love are his daily business, which take up his greatest care and diligence. Whatever opinions or controversies are afoot, his work is still the same: whatever changes come, his Religion

gion changeth not: He placeth not the Kingdom of God in *meats*, and *drinks*, and circumstances, and ceremonies; either being for them or against them; but in righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost: and he that in these things serveth Christ; as he is acceptable to God, so is he approved by such a Christian as this, however factious persons may revile him. Rom. 14. 17, 18, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10. The strong Christian can bear the infirmities of the weak, and not take the course that most pleaseth himself, but that which pleaseth his neighbour for his good to edification. Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3. The essentials of Religion, Faith, and Love and obedience are as Bread and drink, the substance of his food: These he meditateth on, and these he practiseth, and according to these he esteemeth of others.

But yet no price can seem sufficient to him to buy his innocency: Nor will he *willfully sin*, and say it is a little one, nor do evil that good may come by it; nor offer to God the sacrifice of disobedient fools, and then say, I knew not that I did evil: For he knoweth that God will rather have obedience than sacrifice, and that disobedience is as the sin of witchcraft: And he that breaketh one of the least commands and teacheth men so, shall be called Least in the Kingdom of God: And he that teacheth men to sin by the example of his own practice, can little expect to turn them from sin, by his better instructions and exhortations. He that will deliberately sin in a small matter, doth set but a small price on the favour of God and his salvation. Willfull disobedience is odious to God, how small soever the matter be about which it is committed. Who can expect that he should stick at any sin, when his
temptation

temptation is great, who will *considerately* commit the least; especially if he will approve and justify it. Therefore the sound Christian will rather forsake his riches, his liberty, his reputation, his friends, and his country, than his conscience, and rather lay down libertie, and life it self, than choose to sin against his God; as knowing that never man gained by his sin: *Rom. 3. 8. Eccl. 5. 2. 1 Sam. 15. 15; 21, 22, 23. Mat. 5. 19.* The sin that *Saul* was rejected for seemed but a *little thing*; nor the sin that *Uzzah* was slain for: and the service of God, even his sacrifice and his ark were the pretence for both. The sin of the *Beth-shemites*, of *Achan*, of *Gebezi*, of *Ananias* and *Sapphira* which had grievous punishments, would seem but little things to us. And it is a great aggravation of our sin to be *chosen, deliberate, justified* and fathered upon God, and to pretend that we do it for his service, for the worshiping of him, or the doing good to others; as if God would own and bless sinful means, or needed a lie to his service or glory: When he hateth all the workers of iniquity, *Psal. 5. 5.* and requireth only the *sacrifices of righteousness*; *Psal. 4. 5.* He abhorreth sacrifice from polluted hands; they are to him as the offering a dog; and he will ask who hath required this at your hand: see *Psal. 50. 8. 4. Isa. 1. 9, 10, 11, 12. &c. & 58. 1, 2, 3, 4. &c. Jer. 6. 19. 20.* The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord, *Prov. 15. 8. & 21. 27.* It is not pleasing to him: all that eat thereof shall be polluted, *Ho. 9. 4.* See *Isa. 66. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.* The preaching, the praying, the sacraments of wilful sinners especially when they choose sin as necessary to his service, are a scorn and mockery put upon the most Holy one; As if your servant should set dung and carrion

carriage before you, on your table for your food: such offer Christ vinegar and gall to drink.

2. In all this the *weakest Christian* that is sincere is of the same mind; saving that in his ordinary course, he useth to place too much of his Religion in controversies, and parties, and modes, and ceremonies, (whether being *for them or against them*,) and allow too great a proportion in his thoughts, and speech, and zeal, and practice; and hindereth the growth of his grace, by living upon less edifying things, and turning too much from the more substantial nutriment.

3. And the *seeming Christians* are here of different ways. One sort of them place almost all their Religion in Pharisaical observation of *little, external, ceremonial* matters; as their washings, and fastings, and tythings, and formalities, and the traditions of the Elders: Or in their several opinions, and ways, and parties, which they call, *Being of the true Church*: As if *their sect* were all the Church: But living to God in faith and love, and in a Heavenly conversation, and worshipping him in *spirit and truth*, they are utterly unacquainted with. The other sort are truly void of these essential parts of Christianity, in the life and power, as well as the former: But yet being secretly resolved, to take up no more of Christianity than will consist with their worldly prosperity and ends, when any sin seemeth necessary to their preferment, or safety in the world, their way is to pretend their *high esteem of greater matters*, for the swallowing of such a sin as an inconsiderable thing: And then they extol those *larger souls* that live not upon circumstantials, but upon the great and common truths and duties, and pity those men of *narrow principles*

ciples and spirits, who by unnecessary scrupulosity make sin of that which is no sin, and expose themselves to needless trouble. And they would make themselves and others believe that it is their excellency and wisdom, to be above such trifling scruples : And all is because, they never took God and Heaven for their All, and therefore are resolved never to *lose all* for the hopes of Heaven ; and therefore to do that whatever it be, which their worldly interest shall require, and not to be of any religion that will undo them.

And three great pretences are effectual means in this their deceit. One is because indeed, there are a sort of persons, that tythe mint and cummin, while they pass by the greatest matters of the Law, and that are causelessly scrupulous, and make that to be sin, which indeed is no sin : And when such a scrupulous people are noted by their weakness, and under dishonour among wiser men, the Hypocrite hath a very plausible pretence for his hypocrisie, in seeming only to avoid this ignorant scrupulosity, and taking all for such who judge not his sin to be a thing indifferent.

Another great shelter to the credit and conscience of this Hypocrite is, the *Charity* of the best sincerest Christians ; who alwayes judge rigidly of themselves, and gently of others : They would rather die than willfully choose to commit the smallest sin themselves ; but if they see *another* commit it, they judge as favourably of it as the case will bear, and hope that he did it not knowingly, or willfully : For they are bound to hope the best till the worst be evident. This being the upright Christians case, the hypocrite knoweth, that he shall still have a place in the esteem and love of those

charitable Christians (whose integrity and moderation, maketh their judgements most valuable :) And then for the judgement of God he will venture on it ; and for the censures of weaker persons, who themselves are censured by the best for their censoriousness, he can easily bear them.

And another covert for the hypocrite in this case is, the different judgements of learned and religious men, who make a *controversie* of the matter : And what duty or sin is there that is not become a *controversie* ? Yea and among men otherwise well esteemed of (except in the essentials of religion.) And if once it be a *controversie*, whether it be a sin or not, the hypocrite can say, I am of the judgement of such and such good learned men : they are very judicious excellent persons ; and we must not judge one another in controverted cases : though we differ in judgement, we must not differ in affection : And thus because he hath a shelter for his reputation from the censures of men, by the countenance of such as accompany him in his sin, he is as quiet as if he were secured from the censures of the Almighty.

X L. I. *A Christian indeed* is one that highly *valueth time* : He abhorreth *Idleness*, and all diversions which would rob him of his Time, and hinder him from his work : He knoweth how much work he hath to do, and of what unspeakable consequence to his soul (if not also to others :) He knoweth that he hath a soul to save or lose ; a heaven to win ; a hell to scape ; a death and judgement to prepare for ; many a sin to mortifie, and many graces to get and exercise and increase ; and many enemies and temptations to overcome ; and
that

that he shall never have more time of trial; but what is now undone, must be undone for ever: He knoweth how short, and hasty time is, and also how uncertain; and how short many hundred years is to prepare for an everlasting state, if all were spent in greatest diligence: And therefore he wondereth at those miserable souls, that have time to spare, and wast in those fooleries which they call *pastimes*; even in stage-plaies, cards and dice, and long and tedious feasting, delights, complements, idleness, and overlong or needless visits, or recreations. He marvelleth at the distraction, or sottishness of those persons, that can play, and prate, and loyter, and feast away precious hours, as if their poor unprepared souls had nothing to do, while they stand at the very brink of a dreadful eternity; and are to fearfully unready as they are. He taketh that person who would cheat him of his time, by any of these forenamed baits, to be worse to him than a thief that would take his purse from him by the high way. O precious time! how highly doth he value it, when he thinks of his everlasting state, and thinks what hast his death is making, and what reckoning he must make for every moment: what abundance of work hath he for every hour, which he is grieved that he cannot do? He hath a calling to follow, and he hath a heart to search, and watch, and study; and a God to seek and faithfully serve; and many to do good to; and abundance of particular duties to perform, in order to every one of these; But alas time doth make such hast away, that many things are left undone, and he is afraid lest death will find him very much behind hand: And there-

fore he is up and doing, as one that hath use for every minute; and *worketh while it is day*, because he knoweth that the *night is coming when none can work*: Joh. 9. 4. *Redeeming Time* is much of his wisdom and his work: Eph. 5. 16. Col. 4. 5. He had rather labour in the house of correction, than live the swinish life of *idle and voluptuous Gentlemen*, or *Beggars*: that live to no higher end than to *live*, or to please their flesh: or to live as worldlings, that lose all their lives in the service of a perishing world. He knoweth how precious time will be ere long, in the eyes of those that now make light of it, and trifle it away as a contemned thing, as if they had too much.

2. The *weak Christian* is of the same mind in the main: But when it cometh to particular practice, he is like a weak or weary traveller, that goeth but *slowly*, and maketh many a stop: Though his face is still Heaven-wards, he goeth but a little way in a day: He is too easily tempted to idle, or talk, or feast, or play away an hour unlawfully, so it be not his ordinary course, and he do it but seldome: He taketh not the loss of an hour for so great a loss as the *confirmed Christian* doth: He could sooner be perswaded to live (though not an *idle and unprofitable*; yet) an *easier, less-profitable* life. The world and the flesh have farr more of his hours, than they ought to have. Though his weakness tell him, that he hath most need of diligence.

3. But the *Time* of a *seeming Christian* is most at the service of his *fleshy interest*: and for that it is principally employed: And for that he can Redeem it, and grudge if it be lost. But as he liveth

liveth not to God, so he cannot redeem his time for God. He loseth it even when he seemeth to employ it best: when he is praying, or otherwise worshipping God, and doing that good which feedeth his false hopes, he is not *redeeming* his time in all this. While he is sleeping in security, and deluding his soul with a few formal words, and an image of Religion, and his time passeth on, and he is hurried away to the dreadful day, and his damnation slumbreth not. 2 Pet. 2. 3. Pro. 20. 4. Mat. 25. 6, 7, 8.

X L I. 1. *A Christian indeed* is one whose very heart is set upon *doing good*: As one that is *made* to be profitable to *others*, according to his ability and place; even as the Sun is made to shine upon the world: he could not be content to *live idly*, or to *labour unprofitably*, or to get never so much to himself, and live in never so much plenty himself, unless he some way contribute to the good of others: Not that he grudgeth at the smallness of his talents, and lowness or obscurity of his place; for he knoweth that God may dispose his creatures and talents as he please; and that where much is given, much is required, *Mat.* 25. *Luk.* 12. 48. & 19. 23. But what his Lord hath entrusted him with, he is loth to hide, and willing to improve to his Masters use. He is so far from thinking that God is beholden to him for his good works, that he taketh it for one of his greatest mercies in the world, that God will *use* him in doing any good. And he would take it for a very great suffering to be deprived of such opportunities, or turned out of service, or called to less of that kind of duty. If he were a Physician and denied liberty to practice, or a minister and

denied liberty to preach, it would far more trouble him that he is hindered from doing good, than that he is deprived of any profits, or honours, to himself. He doth not only comfort himself with the foresight of the reward, but in the very *doing of good* he findeth so much pleasure, as maketh him think it the delightfullest life in the world: And he looketh for most of his *receivings* from God, in a way of duty, *Joh. 5. 29. Gal. 6. 10. Heb. 13. 16. 1 Pet. 3. 11,*

2. But the *weak Christian*, though he have the same *disposition*, is far less profitable in the world: He is more for himself, and *less able* to do good to others: He wanteth either *parts*, or *prudence*, or *zeal*, or *strength*: Yea he is oft like the infants and sick persons of a family, that are not helpful, but troublesome to the rest: They find work for the stronger Christians, to bear their infirmities, and watch them, and support and help them: Indeed as an infant is a comfort to the mother, through the power of her own love, even when she endureth the trouble of its crying and uncleanness; so *weak Christians* are a comfort to charitable ministers and people; we are glad that they are alive; but saddened often by their distempers, *Rom. 14. 1. & 15. 12.*

3. The *seeming Christian* liveth to himself, and all his *good works* are done but *for himself*, to keep up his credit, or quiet his guilty conscience, and deceive himself with the false hopes of a reward, for that which his falseheartedness maketh to be his sin: If he be a man of learning and good parts, he may be very serviceable to the Church: But the thanks of that is due to God, and little to him; who seeketh himself more than God,

or

or the good of others, in all that he doth. *Mat.* 25, 24, 25, 26.

XLII. 1. *A Christian indeed doth truly love his neighbour as himself*: He is not all for his own commodity: His neighbours profit or good name is as his own: He feeleth himself hurt, when his neighbour is hurt: And if his neighbour prosper, he rejoyceth as if he prospered himself: Though his neighbour be not united to him, in the nearest bonds of Christianity, or Piety, yet he is not disregardfull of the *common Unity of Humanity*. Love is the very soul of life, *Lev. 19. 18. Mat. 19. 19. & 22. 39. Rom. 13. 9. Gal. 5. 14. Jam. 2. 8. Mark. 10. 21. 1 Joh. 4. 10.*

2. But the Love that is in *weaker Christians*, though it be *sincere*, is *weak* as they are; and mixed with too much selfishness; and with too much soweriness and wrath: *Little matters* cause differences and *fallings out*: When it cometh to **MINE**, and **THINE**, and their neighbours cross their interest or commodity, or stand in their way, when they are seeking any preferment or profit to themselves; you shall see too easily by their soweriness and contention, how weak their love is. *Mat. 24. 12. 1 Tim. 6. 10. Luke 22. 24.*

3. But in the *seeming Christian* selfishness is so predominant, that he loveth none but for *himself*, with any considerable love: All his kindness is from self-love; because men love him, or highly value him, or praise him, or have done him some good turn, or may do him good hereafter, or the like. If he hath any love to any for his own worth, yet *self-love* can turn all that to hatred, if they seem *against him*, or cross him in his way: For no man that is a *Lover of the world, and flesh,*

and carnall self, can ever be a true friend to any other. For he loveth them but for his own ends; and any cross Interests will shew the falshood of his love. 2 Tim. 3. 2, 3, 4. Mat. 5. 46.

XLIII. 1. *A Christian indeed hath a special Love to all the Godly: such as endareth his heart unto them: and such as will enable him, to visit them and relieve them in their wants, to his own loss and hazzard, according to his ability and opportunity. For the image of God is beautifull and honourable in his eyes: He loveth not them so much as God in them; Christ in them; the Holy Spirit in them. He foreseeth the day when he shall meet them in Heaven, and there rejoyce in God with them to Eternity. He loveth their company and converse; and delighteth in their gracious words and lives: And the converse of ungodly empty men, is a weariness to him (unless in a way of duty, or when he can do them good.) In his eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord, Psal. 15. 4. Other men grieve his soul with their iniquities, while he is delighted with the appearances of God in his holy ones: even the excellent ones on earth, Psal. 16. 3. 2 Pet. 2. 7, 8. Yea, the infirmities of Believers destroy not his Love; for he hath learned of God himself to difference between their abhorred frailties and their predominant Grace; and to love the very Infants in the Family of Christ. Yea, though they wrong him, or quarrel with him, or censure him in their weakness, he can honour their sincerity, and love them still: And if some of them prove scandalous, and some seeming Christians fall away, or fall into the most odious crimes, he loveth Religion never the less; but continueth*

continueth as high an esteem of piety, and of all that are upright as he had before, 1 *Job.* 4. 7, 8, 10. *Job.* 13. 34, 35. 1 *Thess.* 4. 9. 1 *Job.* 3. 11, 14, 23. *Matth.* 25. 39, 40, &c.

2. The weak Christian sincerely loveth all that bear his Fathers image : But it is with a Love so weak (even when it is most passionate) as will sooner be abated or interrupted by any tempting differences : He is usually quarrelsome and froward with his Brethren ; and apter to confine his love to those that are of his *own opinion or party* : And because God hath taught him to love all that are sincere ; the Devil tempteth him to *conspire* them as *not sincere*, that so he may *justify* himself in the abatement of his love. And weak Christians are usually the most censorious, because they have the smallest degree of Love, which covereth faults, and thinketh no evil, and is not suspicious, but ever apt to judge the best, till the worst be evident, 1 *Cor.* 13. 4, 5. *It beareth all things, believeth all things* (that are credible) *hopeth all things, endureth all things*, v. 7. But it is no wonder to see children fall out, even about their childish toys and trifles : And what the dissensions of the children of the Church have done against themselves in these Kingdoms, I need not, I delight not to record. See 1 *Cor.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. *And I brethren could not speak unto you, as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat ; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able : For ye are yet carnal : for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are you not carnal, and walk as men.*

3. The seeming Christian may have some love
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to reall Christians, even for their goodness sake : But it is a Love subservient to his carnal self-love : And therefore it shall not cost him much : As he hath some Love to Christ, so he may have some Love to *Christians* ; but he hath *more* to the *world* and *fleshy* pleasures : And therefore all his Love to Christ or Christians, will not make him leave his worldly happiness for them. And therefore Christ at the day of Judgement will not enquire after empty barren love, but after that love which visited and relieved suffering Saints. An hypocrite can allow both Christ and Christians such a cheap superficial kind of love, as will cost him little : He will bid them lovingly, *Depart in peace, be you warmed and filled*, Jam. 2. 15, 16, 17. But still the World is *most beloved*.

XLIV. 1. *A Christian indeed doth love his enemies*, and forgive those that injure him, and this out of a thankfull sense of that grace which forgave him a farr greater debt : Nor that he thinketh it unlawfull to make use of the Justice of the Government which he is under, for his necessary protection, or for the restraint of mens abuse and violence : Nor is he bound to love the *malice* or *injury*, though he must love the *man* : Nor can he forgive a *crime* as it is *against God* or the *common good*, or *against another*, though he can forgive an *injury* or *debt* that is his own : Nor is he bound to forgive *every debt*, though he is bound so farre to forgive every wrong as heartily to desire the good of him that did it. Even *Gods Enemies* he so farre loveth, as to desire God to convert and pardon them, while he hateth their *sin*, and *hateth them as Gods enemies*, and desireth their restraint, Psal. 139. 21, 22. & 101. 3. & 119. 4. & 68. 1. & 21.8.

& 21. 8. But those that *bate*, and *curse*, and *persecute himself*, he can unfeignedly *love*, and *bleſs*, and *pray for*, Matth. 5. 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48. For he knoweth that else he cannot be a *child of God*, v. 45. And that to *love those that love him* is not much praise-worthy, being no more than *Heathens* and *wicked men* can do : v. 46, 47. He is so deeply sensible of that wondrous love, which so dearly redeemed him, and saved him from *Hell*, and forgave him a thousandfold worse than the worst that ever was done against himself, that *Thankfulness* and *Imitation*, or *Conformity* to *Christ* in his great compassions, do overcome his desires of revenge, and make him willing to do good to his most cruel enemies; and pray for them as *Christ* and *Stephen* did at their deaths, *Luk.* 23. 34. *Acts* 7. 60. And he knoweth that he is so inconsiderable a worm, that a wrong done to him as *such*, is the less considerable : And he knoweth that he daily wrongeth *God* more than any man can wrong him, and that he can hope for pardon but on condition that he himself forgive, *Matth.* 6. 12, 14, 15. & 18. 34, 35. And that he is far more hurtfull to himself, than any other can be to him.

2. And the *weakest Christian* can truly love an enemy, and forgive a wrong; but he doth it not so easily and so fully as the other. But it is with much striving, and some unwillingness and averſeness; and there remaineth some grudge or strangeness upon the minde: He doth not sufficiently forget the wrong which he doth forgive. Indeed his forgiving is very imperfect like himself, *Matth.* 18. 21. *Luk.* 9. 54, 55. not with that freeness and readiness required, *Eph.* 4. 2. *With all lowliness*
and

and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, Col. 3. 12, 13. Put on therefore (as the Elect of God, holy and beloved) bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of minde, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye, Rom. 12. 14, 19. *Avenge not your selves, &c.*

3. As for the seeming Christian, he can seem to forgive wrongs for the sake of Christ, but if he do it indeed it is for his own sake: As because it is for his honour, or because the person hath humbled himself to him, or his commodity requireth it, or he can make use of his love and service for his advantage, or some one hath interposed for reconciliation who must not be denyed, or the like: But to love an enemy indeed, and to love that man (be he never so good) who standeth in the way of his preferment, honour or commodity in the world, he never doth it from his heart, whatever he may seem to doe, *Matth. 6. 14, 15. & 18. 27, 30, 32.* The Love of Christ doth not constrain him.

XLV. 1. A Christian indeed is as precise in the Justice of his dealings with men, as in acts of piety to God. For he knoweth that God requireth this as strictly at his hands, *1 Thess. 4. 6.* That no man go beyond, or defraud his Brother in any matter; for the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned and testified. He is one that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart; that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour. If he swear to his own hurt, he changeth not: He putteth not out his money to (unjust or unmercifull) Usury;

nor taketh reward against the innocent, Psal. 15. He obeyeth that, Lev. 19. 13. *Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him, the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night untill the morning.* He can say as Samuel, 1 Sam. 12. *Whose Oxe or Asse have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe, to blinde mine eyes therewith, and I will restore it? And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any mans hand.* And if heretofore he was ever guilty of defrauding any, he is willing to his power to make restitution; and saith as Zachew, Luk. 19. 8. *If I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold.* Though flesh and blood perswade him to the contrary, and though it leave him in want, he will pay his debts, and make restitution of that which is ill gotten, as being none of his own. He will not sell for as much as he can get, but for as much as it is truly worth: He will not take advantage of the weakness, or ignorance, or necessity of his neighbour: He knoweth that *a false ballance is abomination to the Lord; but a just weight is his delight,* Prov. 11. 1. He is afraid of believing ill reports, and rebuketh the backbiter, Prov. 25. 23. He is apt to take part with any man behind his back, who is not notoriously inexcusable; not to justify any evil; but to shew his charity, and his hatred of evil speaking, especially where it can do no good. He will not believe evil of another till the evidence do compell him to believe it. If he have wronged any by incautelous words, he readily confesseth his fault to him, and asketh him forgiveness, and is ready to make any just satisfaction

satisfaction for any wrong that he hath done. He *borroweth not* when he seeth not a great probability that he is like to pay it : Nor will remain in debt by retaining that which is another mans against his will, without an absolute necessity. *Rom. 13. 8. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another.* For to borrow when he cannot pay is but to steal. *Begging* is better than *borrowing* for such, *Psal. 37. 21. The wicked borroweth and payeth not.*

2. And the *weak Christian* maketh conscience of *Justice* as well as acts of piety, as knowing that God hath no need of our Sacrifices, but loveth to see us do that which is good for humane society, and which we have need of from each other. But yet he hath more *selfishness* and *partiality* than the confirmed Christian hath, and therefore is often overcome by temptations to unrighteous things : As to stretch his Conscience for his commodity, in buying or selling, and concealing the faults of what he selleth, and sometimes overreaching others : Especially he is ordinarily too censorious of others, and apt to be credulous of evil reports, and to be overbold and forward in speaking ill of men behind their backs, and without a call : especially against persons that differ from him in matters of Religion, where he is usually most unjust and apt to go beyond his bounds, *Jam. 3. 15, 16. Tit. 3. 2. Eph. 4. 31. 1 Pet. 2. 1.*

3. The *seeming Christian* may have a *seeming Justice*. But really he hath none but what must give place to his fleshly interest; and if his honour and commodity and safety require it, he will not stick to be unjust. And that Justice which wanteth

eth but a strong temptation to overturn it, is almost as bad as none. If he will not seize on *Naboths Vineyard*, nor make himself odious by oppression or deceit; yet if he can raise or enrich himself by *secret consenage*, and get so fair a pretence for his injustice, as shall cloak the matter from the sight of men, he seldom sticketh at it. It is an easie matter to make an *Achan* think that he doth no harm, or a *Gebazi* think that he wrongeth no man, in taking that which was offered and due. Covetousness will not confess its name; but will find some Reasonings to make good all the injustice which it doth, 1 Tim. 6. 5. 2 King. 5. 19, 20.

XLVI. 1. *A Christian indeed* is faithfull and laborious in his particular calling, and that not out of a covetous minde; but in obedience to God, and that he may maintain his Family, and be able to do good to others. For God hath said, *In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread*, Gen. 3. 19. *And six dayes shalt thou labour*, Exod. 20. 10. And with quietness men must work, and eat their own bread; and if any will not work, neither should he eat, 2 Thess. 3. 10, 11, 12. *Abraham* and *Noah* and *Adam* laboured in a constant course of employment. He knoweth that a sanctified calling and labour is a help, and not a hinderance to devotion; and that the body must have work as well as the soul, and that Religion must not be pretended for slothfull idleness, nor against obedience to our Masters will, Prov. 31.

2. The *weak Christian* is here more easily deceived, and made believe that Religion will excuse a man from bodily labour: and under the colour of devotion to live idly. 2 Thess. 3. 8. 1 Tim. 5. 13.
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They learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. Slothfulness is a sin much condemned in the Scriptures, Ezek. 16. 49. Prov. 24. 30. & 18. 9. & 21. 25. Mat. 25. 26. Rom. 12. 11.

3. The *seeming Christian* in his labour is ruled chiefly by his flesh: If he be rich, and it incline him most to sloth, he maketh small conscience of living in idleness, under the pretence of his Gentility or wealth: But if the flesh incline him more to Covetousness, he will be laborious enough; but it shall not be to please God by obedience, but to increase his Estate, and enrich himself and his Posterity (whatever better reason he pretend.)

XLVII. 1. *A Christian indeed is exactly conscientious in the duties of his relation to others in the family and place of his abode: If he be a husband, he is loving and patient and faithfull to his wife: If he be a father, he is carefull of the holy education of his children: If he be a Master, he is just and mercifull to his servants, and carefull for the saving of their souls. If he be a childe or servant, he is obedient, trusty, diligent and carefull, as well behind his Parents or his Masters back, as before his face. He dare not lie, nor steal, nor deceive, nor neglect his duty, nor speak dishonourably of his Superiors, though he were sure he could conceal it all. For he knoweth that the fifth Commandement is enforced with a special Promise, Eph. 6. 2. 5. 9. And that a bad Childe, or a bad Servant, a bad Husband or Wife, a bad Parent or Master cannot be a good Christian, Col. 3. 18, 19, &c. 4. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 18.*

2. But *weak Christians* (though sincere) are ordinarily

ordinarily weak in this part of their duty ; and apt to yield to temptations , and carry themselves proudly, stubbornly, idly, disobediently, as *eye-servants* that are good in sight : or to be unmerciful to inferiours and neglecters of their souls : And to excuse all this from the faults of those that they have to do with, and lay all upon others ; as if the fault of husband, wife, parent, master or servant would justify them in theirs ; and *passion* and *partiality* would serve for innocency.

3. And the *Hypocrite* ordinarily sheweth his hypocrisies, by being false in his relations to man, while he pretendeth to be pious and obedient unto God. He is a bad master, and a bad servant, when his filthy interest requireth it, and yet thinketh himself a good Christian for all that. For all men being faulty, it is easie to find a pretence from all men that he doth abuse, to cover the injury of his abuse. *Cain, Cham, Eli, Absalom, Judas, &c.* are sad examples of this.

XLVIII. 1. *A Christian indeed is the best subject*, whether his Prince be good or bad : Though by infidel and *ungodly Rulers* he be oft mistaken for the worst. He obeyeth not his Rulers only for his *own ends* ; but in *obedience to God* ; and not only for fear of punishment, but for *conscience sake* : He looketh on them in their relations as the *Officers of God*, and armed with his authority, and therefore obeyeth God in them. He permitteth not dishonourable thoughts of them in his heart ; much less dare he speak dishonourably of them, *Exod. 12. Prov. 24. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 13, 17. Prov. 8. 15. Añ. 23. 4. 5. Eccles. 10. 4, 20.* He knoweth that every soul must be *subject to the higher powers*, and not resist ; and that there is no power but of God : *Whoever therefore resisteth*

sisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and he that resisteth shall receive to himself damnation, Rom. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Therefore in all things lawfull he obeyeth them: And though he must not, nor will not obey them *against God*, yet will he suffer patiently when he is wronged by them; and not only forbear resistance by arms or violence, but also all reproachfull words; as knowing that the righting of himself is not so necessary to the publick order and good, as the honour of his Rulers is. *Usurpers* may probably charge him to be a Traitor, and seditious and rebellious, because he dare not approve of their Usurpations: and when several are contending for the Government, and in a litigious Title the Lawyers mislead him, when the controversie is only *among them*, and belongs to *their profession*, its possible he may mistake as well as the Lawyers, and take him to have the better Title that hath the worse: But in *Divinity* he knoweth there is no controversie whether *every soul must be subject to the highest power*, so far as he can know it: And that prayers and patience are the Subjects arms; and Religion is so far from being a warrant to resist, that it plainly forbiddeth disobedience and resistance: and none are more obliged to submission and quietness than Christians are: The spirit of Christianity is not of this world: Their Kingdom and their Hopes are not of this world: And therefore they contend not for dignities and rule; much less by resisting or rebelling against their lawfull Governours. But they are resolved to obey God, and secure their everlasting portion, and bear all the injuries which they meet with in the way; especially from those whom God hath set over them. There is no Doctrine that ever
was

was received in the world, so far from befriending seditious and rebellion as the Doctrine of Christ; nor any people in the world so loyal as Christians, while Christianity retained its genuine simplicity; till proud, domineering, worldly men for carnal ends pretended themselves to be Christians, and perverted the Doctrine of Christ, to make it warp to their ambitious ends; suffering seemeth not so great a matter to a holy, mortified, heavenly mind, as to tempt him to hazard his salvation to resist it. No man is so likely to be true to Kings, as he that believeth that his salvation lieth on it, by the ordinance of God, *Rom. 13. 3.* And Princes that are wise and just do alwaies discern that the best Christians are their best subjects: Though those that are *unbelieving* and *ungodly* themselves, have ever hated them as the greatest troublers of the Earth. And it hath ever been the practice of the Enemies of *Christ* and *Godliness*, to do all they can to engage the Rulers of the Earth against them; and to persuade them that the most *godly Christians* are persons of disloyal and unquiet minds; and by vexing and persecuting them, they do their worst to *make* them such as they falsely called them: Even Christ himself was crucified as an enemy to *Cesar*, and *Pilate* driven to it by the noise of them that cryed out, that if he *let them go*, he *was not Cæsars friend*, *Joh. 19. 12.* They first tempted him with the question, *whether it were lawfull to give tribute unto Cesar*, *Matth. 22. 17.* *Luke 20. 22.* And though they could this way take no hold of him, yet this was the first article of his accusation, *Luke 23. 2. we have found this fellow perverting the Nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cesar.* And how loyal would those rebellious Jews seem, when they

thought it the only way to engage the *Roman Power* against Christ? Then they cry out, *We have no King but Caesar*, Joh. 19. 15. And this was the common accusation against the Christians both by Jews and Gentiles: The language of the Jews you may hear from *Tertullus*, *Acts* 24. 5. *We have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarens.* And at *Thessalonica*, *Acts* 17. 6, 7. the charge against them was, that they turned the world upside down, and did all contrary to the decrees of *Caesar*. And thus the best Christians have by such been slandered from age to age: because the Devil and his instruments know not how sufficiently to molest them, except they engage the Rulers against them. But yet all this doth not conquer the patience and loyalty of confirmed Christians. They are wiser than that *wise man* that *Solomon* saith, *Oppression maketh mad*, *Eccles.* 7. 7. If usurpers or malicious lyars shall a thousand times call them rebellious and seditious, it shall not drive them from their due subjection: They can patiently follow their Lord and the ancient Christians, in the enduring of such slanders, and suffering as enemies to *Caesar*, so they do but scape the sin, and be not such as malice calleth them. They had rather die as reputed enemies to Government, than to be such indeed. They prefer subjection before the reputation of it; For they look not for their reward from Princes, but from God. If they can preserve their *innocency*, they can bear the defamation of their names; being satisfied in the hopes of the joyfull day of the Judgement of Christ, which will fully justifie them, and set all strait. Indeed they know that a state of sub-

jection

jection is easier and safer than places of command; and that it is easier to obey than govern. And so far are they from envying mens greatness, and from desiring dominions, that they pity the tempted, and dangerous, and troublesome state of those in power, and are thankful to God for their quieter and safer station. They heartily pray for *Kings*, and all that are in *Authority*; not that by their favour they may rise to places of wealth and honour; but *that under them they may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty*, 1 Tim. 2. 2. Yea, though Infidel Princes hate and persecute them, they continue to pray for them, and to honour their authority, and will not thereby be driven from their duty. If God cast their lot under Infidel, ungodly and malicious Governours, they do not run to arms, to save themselves, or save the Gospel, as if God had called them to reform the world, or keep it from the oppression of the higher powers: Nor do they think it a strange intollerable matter for the best men to be lowest, and to be the suffering side; and so fall to fighting that Christ and the Saints may have the rule. For they know that *Christ's Kingdom is not of this world*, Joh. 18. 36. (that is, *not a visible Monarchy*, as his usurping Vicar doth pretend;) and that Christ doth most eminently rule unseen, and disposeth of all the Kingdoms of the world, even where he is hated and resisted: and that the reign of Saints is in their state of glory: and that all Gods graces do fit them more for a suffering life, than for worldly power: Their humility, meekness, patience, self-denial, contempt of the world, and heavenly mindedness, are better exercised and promoted in a *suffering*, than a *prosperous reigning* state, When they

think of the holy blood which hath been shed by Heathen Rome, from Christ and Stephen till the daies of Constantine; and the far greater streams which have been shed by the bloody Papal Rome; where-ever they had power, in Piedmont, Germany, Poland, Hungary, in Belgia, England, and in other Lands; the 30000, or 40000 murdered in a few daies at the Bartholomew Massacre in France; the two hundred thousand murdered in a few weeks in Ireland; they are not so unlike their suffering Brethren, as to think that striving for honours and command, is *their* way to Heaven: When Christ hath foretold them that *self-denial* under the Cross, tribulation and persecution, is the common way, Luk. 14. 26, 27, 29, 33. Acts 14. 22. Job. 16. 33. Rom. 5. 3. & 8. 35. 2 Tim. 3. 12. Mat. 5. 10, 11, 12. 2 Thes. 2. 6, 7, 10. Mark 10. 30. So far are they from fighting against the injuries and cruelties of their Governours, that they account the reproach of Christ to be greater riches than all their treasures, Heb. 11. 25, 26. and think they are blessed when they are persecuted, Matth. 5. 10. and say with Paul, God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world, Gal. 6. 14. And 2 Cor. 12. 19. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christs sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong, Rom. 8. 35, 36, 37. Nay in all these things (when persecuted and killed all the day long, and counted as sheep to the slaughter) they are more than Conquerours through Christ; They obtain a nobler conquest than that which is obtained by the sword.

2. But the weak Christian having less patience,
and

and more selfishness and passion, is easilier tempted to break his bounds, and with Peter, to run to his unauthorized sword, when he should submit to suffering, *Matth. 26. 51, 52.* And his interest and sufferings cause his passion to have too great a power on his Judgement; so that he is easilier tempted to believe that to be lawfull, which he thinks to be necessary to his own preservation: and to think that the Gospel and the Church are falling, when the power of men is turned against them; and therefore he must with *Uzzah*, put forth his hand to save the Ark of God from falling. He is more troubled at mens injustice and cruelty, and maketh a wonder of it to find the enemies of Christ and Godliness, to be unreasonably impudent and bloody; as if he expected reason and righteousness in the malicious world. His sufferings fill him more with discontent, and desires of revenge from God, *Luke 9. 54.* and his prosperity too much lifts him up, *2 Chron. 32. 25.* And in the litigious titles of pretenders to supremacy, he is oft too hasty to interest himself in their contentions; as if he understood not, that whoever is the conquerour, will count those rebels that were on the other side; and that the enemies of Christ will cast all the odium upon Christianity and piety, when the controversie is only among the Statesmen and Lawyers, and belongs not to Religion at all.

3. The seeming Christian will seem to excel all others in loyalty and obedience, when it maketh for his carnal ends: He will flatter Rulers for honours and preferment, and alwaies be on the rising side, unless when his pride engageth him in murmurings and rebellions. He hath a great advantage

above true Christians and honest men, to seem the most obedient subject; because he hath a stretching conscience that can do any thing for his safety, or his worldly ends: If he be among Papists, he can be a Papist; if among Protestants, he is a Protestant; and if he were among Turks, its like he would rather turn a Mahometan than be undone. No Prince or Power can command him any thing which he cannot yield to, if his worldly interest require it. If there be a Law for worshipping the golden Image, it is the conscionable servants of God, and not the time-servers, that refuse to obey it, *Dan. 3*. If there be a Law against praying, *Dan. 6*. it is *Daniel* and not the ungodly multitude that disobey it. If there be a command against preaching, *Acts 4. 17, 18*. it is the holy Apostles and best Christians that plead the command of God against it, and refuse obedience to it, *vers. 20, 29*. The self-seeking temporizing hypocrite can do any thing: And yet he *obeyeth* not while he *seemeth* to obey. For it is not for the Authority of the Commander that he doth it, but for his own ends. He never truly honoureth his superiours: for he doth not respect them as the Officers of God; nor obey them for his sake with a conscionable obedience. He feareth the Higher Powers as Bears or Tygers that are able to hurt him; or useth their favour, as he useth his horse to do him service. Were it not for *himself*, he would little regard them. The true Christian honoureth the basest creature, more than the hypocrite and worldling honoureth his King. For he seeth God in all, and useth the smallest things unto his glory: Whereas the worldling debaseth the highest, by the baseness of his esteem, and use, and end; For he knoweth

knoweth not how to esteem or use the greatest Prince, but for *himself* or for some *worldly* ends,
2 Tim. 3. 3, 4.

XLIX. 1. *A Christian indeed*, is a man of *courage* and *fortitude* in every cause of God. For he *trusteth God*, and firmly believeth that he will bear him out. He knoweth his superiours, and hath a *charitable respect* to *all men*; but as for any *selfish* or *timorous respect*, he hath the least regard to *man*. For he knoweth that the greatest are but *worms*; whose breath is in their nostrils; that pass away as shadows and return to dust; and that the most potent are impotent when they contend with God; and are unequal matches to strive against their maker; and that it will prove hard for them to kick against the pricks; and that whoever seemeth now to have the day, it is God that will be Conquerour at last. Job 25. 6. & 17. 14. & 24. 20. Psal. 79. 31. & 103. 16. & 144. 4. Act. 9. 4, 5, 6. Psal. 144. 3, 4, 5. Put not your trust in Princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help: his breath goeth forth; he returneth to his earth: in that very day, his thoughts perish. Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help; whose hope is in the Lord his God, Isa. 45. 9. Who to him that striveth with his maker. He knoweth that it is more irrational to fear man against God, than to fear a flea or a fly against the greatest man. The infinite disproportion between the creature that is against him, and the Creator that is for him, doth resolve him to obey the command of Christ, Luk. 12. 4. Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do: but I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: Fear him which after he hath killed hath power to cast into

into hell : yea I say unto you fear him. Isa. 57. 7, 8. Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law : Fear ye not the reproof of man, neither be afraid of their revilings : for the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool : but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my Salvation from generation to generation. Isa. 50. 6, 7, 8, 9. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair : I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me : therefore shall I not be confounded : therefore have I set my face like a flint ; and I know that I shall not be ashamed : He is near that justifieth me ; who will contend with me : Let us stand together who is mine adversary : let him come near to me : Behold the Lord God will help me : who is he that shall condemn me ; Lo, they all shall wax old as a garment ; the moth shall eat them up. Isa. 35. 4. & 41. 10, 13, 14. & 7. 4. Jer. 46. 27, 28. Mat. 10. 26, 31. Isa. 2. 22. Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils ; for wherein is he to be accounted of. Jer. 17. 5, 8, 9. Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, &c. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, &c. Alas how terrible is the wrath of God, in comparison of the wrath of man ! and how easie an enemy is the cruellest afflicter, in comparison of a holy sin-revenging God. Therefore the confirmed Christian saith as the three witnesses, Dan. 3. 16, 17, 18. We are not carefull to answer thee in this matter : the God whom we serve is able to deliver us — But if not, be it known unto thee O King that we will not serve thy Gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up. Dan. 6. 10. When Daniel knew that the Decree was past, he

he prayed openly in his house, as heretofore, Heb.

11. 27. Moses, feared not the wrath of the King, for he endured as seeing him that is invisible, Prov.

28. 1. The righteous is bold as a Lion: Act. 4. 13.

when they saw the boldness of Peter and John they marvelled. 2 Cor. 11. 21. Pauls bonds made others

bold, Eph. 6. 19, 20. Act. 4. 29, 31. 1 Joh. 4. 18.

Perfect love casteth out fear: 1 Pet. 3. 14. If ye suffer for righteousness sake happy are ye; and be not

afraid of their terror, neither be troubled. Heb. 13. 6.

So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper,

and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

2. But the weak Christian, though he also trust

in God, is much more fearful, and easily daunted

and discouraged: and ready with Peter to be

afraid, if he perceive himself in danger: Matth.

26. 69. He is not valiant for the truth, Jer. 9. 3.

Though he can forsake all (even life it self) for

Christ (Luk. 14. 26, 33.) yet is it with a deal

of fear and trouble: And Man is a more significant

thing to him than to the stronger Christian.

3. But the seeming Christian doth fear man

more than God, and will venture upon the displea-

sure of God to avoid the displeasure of men that

can do him hurt: because he doth not soundly

believe the threatnings of the word of God.

L. 1. A Christian indeed is made up of Judgement

and Zeal conjunct. His Judgement is not a patron

of Lukewarmness, nor his Zeal an enemy to know-

ledge: His judgement doth not destroy but increase

his Zeal: and his Zeal is not blind nor self-conceit-

ed, nor doth run before or without judgement.

If he be of the most excellent sort of Christians, he

hath so large a knowledge of the mysteries of god-

liness, that he seeth the body of sacred truth with

its parts and compages or joynts, as it were at once, It is all written deeply and methodically in his understanding : He hath by long use his senses exercised to discern both good and evil, *Heb. 5. 14.* He presently discerneth where mistaken men go out of the way, and lose the truth by false suppositions, or by false definitions, or by confounding things that differ. And therefore he pittiyeth the contentious sects and disputers who raise a dust to blind themselves and others, and make a stir to the trouble of the Church, about things which they never understood : And in the light of that truth which others obscure or contradict, he enjoyeth much content or pleasure in his own mind, though incapable persons zealously reject it. Therefore he is *steadfast*, as knowing on what ground he setteth his foot. And though he be the greatest lover of truth, and would with greatest joy receive any addition to his knowledge, yet ordinarily by erroneous zealots, he is censured as too stiff and self-conceited and tenacious of his own opinions; because he will not entertain their errors and obey them in their self-conceitedness : For he that knoweth that it is *truth* which he holdeth, is neither able, nor willing to hold the contrary (unless he imprison the truth in unrighteousness) But if he be one that hath not attained to such a clear comprehensive judgement, yet with that measure of judgement which he hath, he doth *guide* and *regulate* his *zeal*; and maketh it follow after, while understanding goeth before. He treadeth on sure ground, and knoweth it to be *duty* indeed which he is *zealous* for, and *sin* indeed which he is zealous against; and is not put to excuse all his fervour and forwardness after with a *non putarem*, or

I had

I had thought it had been otherwise, 1 Cor. 1. 5.
2 Cor. 8. 7. Col. 3. 16. & 4. 12.

2. But the *weak Christian* either hearkeneth too much to carnal wisdom, which suppresseth his zeal, and maketh him too heavy and dull and indifferent in many of his duties, and the concerns of his soul; permitting the world to take up too much of the vigour of his spirit; Or else he is *confident* in his mistakes, and verily thinks that he understandeth better than many wiser men, these things which he never understood at all. He chooseth his party by the *Zeal* that he findeth in them without any judicious tryal of the truth of what they hold and teach: He is very earnest for many a supposed truth and duty, which proveth at last to be no truth or duty at all: And he censurcth many a wiser Christian than himself, for many a supposed *sin* which is *no sin*, but perhaps a *duty*. For he is alwayes injudicious, and his *heat* is greater than his *light* (or else his light is too flashy without heat:) Peremptorily he doth set down some among the number of the most wise and excellent men, for keeping him company in his mistakes: And he boldly numbrell the best and wisest of his Teachers with the transgressors, for being of a sounder understanding than himself, and doing those *duties* which he calleth *sins*: And hence it is that he is a person apt to be mislead, by appearances of *Zeal*; and the *Passions* of his Teachers prevail more with him than the Evidence of Truth. He that Prayeth and Preacheth most *fer- vently* is the man that carryeth him away, though none of his Arguments be truly cogent. If he hear any *hard name* against any *opinion* or manner of worship, he receiveth that prejudice which turn-
eth

eth him more against it, than *reason* could have done: so the bug-bear name of *Heretic*, *Lutheranism* and *Calvinism* frightneth many a well-meaning Papist both from the *Truth* and almost from his wits: And the names of *Popery*, *Arminianism*, *Prelacy*, *Presbyterianism*, *Independancy*, &c. do turn away the hearts of many, from things which they never *tryed* or understood: If a zealous Preacher do but call any opinion or practice *Antichristian*, or *Idolatrous*, it is a more effectual terrour than the clearest proof. Big and terrible words do move the *passions*, while the understanding is abused, or a stranger to the cause; And *Passion* is much of their Religion. And hence, alas, is much of the calamity of the Church: *Rom. 14. 1, 2, 3, 4, &c. 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. Act. 21. 20. Gal. 4. 17, 18.*

3. But the *seeming Christian* is only *zealous finally* for *Himself*, or zealous about the smaller matters of Religion, as the Pharisees were for their Ceremonies and traditions; or for his own inventions, or some opinions or wayes, in which his honour seemeth to be interessed, and *pride* is the bellows of his zeal: But as for a holy zeal about the substance and practice of Religion, and that for *God* as the *final* cause, he is a stranger to it. He may have a *zeal of God*, and of, and for the *Law* and *Worship* of God as the *material* cause, but not a true zeal for *God* as the chief final cause. *Rom. 10. 2. 2 Sam. 21. 2. 2 King. 10. 16. Act. 22. 3.*

LI. A *Christian* indeed can bear the infirmities of the *weak*: Though he *love* not their weakness, yet he *pittyeth* it because he truly *loveth* their persons. Christ hath taught him not to *break the bruised reed*, and to *gather the Lambs in his arms*, and *carry them in his bosome*, and gently lead them

them that are with young, Isa. 40. 11. & 42. 3. If they have diseases and distempers, he seeketh in tenderness to cure them, and not in wrath to hurt and vex them. He turneth not the Infants or sick persons from the family, because they cry or are unquiet, unclean, infirm and troublesome : but he exerciseth his love and pitty upon their weakneses. If they mistake their way, or are ignorant, and peevish and froward in their mistakes, he seeketh not to undoe them, but gently to reduce them. If they *censure* himself, and call him erroneous, heretical, antichristian, idolatrous, because he concurrerh not with them in their mistakes, he beareth it with Love and patience, as he would do the peevish chidings of a child, or the frowardness of the sick. He doth not lose his charity, and set his wit against a Child; and aggravate the crimes, and being reviled revile again; and say, you are Schismaticks, hypocrites, obstinate, and fit to be severely dealt with: but he overcometh them with love and patience, which is the conquest of a Saint, and the happiell victory both for himself and them. It is a small matter to him to be judged of man, 1 Cor. 4. 3, 4. He is more troubled for the *weakness* and *disease* of the censorious, than for his *own* being *wronged* by their censures, Phil. 1. 16, 17, 18. Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3. & 14. 2, 3.

2. But the *weak Christian* is readier to *censure* others than patiently to bear a *censure* himself. Either he stormeth against the Censurers as if they did him some unsufferable wrong, (through the over-great esteem of himself and his reputation;) or else to escape the fangs of *censure*, and keep up his *repute* with them, he complyeth with the

the censorious, and overruns his judgement and conscience to be well spoken of, and counted a sincere and stedfast man, *Gal. 2. 12, 13, 14.*

3. But the *seeming Christian* is so proud and selfish, and wanteth Charity and tenderness to the weak, that he is impatient of their provocations; and would cure the diseases of the servants of Christ, by cutting their throats, or ridding the Countrey of them. If a Child do but wrangle with him, he cryeth, Away with him, he is a troubler of the World: He taketh more notice of one of their infirmities, than of all their graces: yea he can see nothing but obstinacy and hypocrisie in them, if they do but cross him in his opinions, or reputation, or worldly ends. Selfishness can turn his *Hypocrisie* into *Malignity* and cruelty, if once he take them to be against his interest. Indeed his *interest* can make him patient: He can bear with them that he looketh to gain by: but not with them that seem to be against him. The radical enmity against sincerity that was not mortified but covered in his heart will easily be again uncovered, *Mark. 6. 18, 20, 21, 22. Phil. 1. 15, 16. 3 Joh. 9.*

LII. 1. *A Christian indeed is a great esteemer of the Unity of the Church, and greatly averse to all Divisions among Believers.* As there is in the natural body an abhorring of dismembring or separating any part from the whole; so there is in the mystical body of Christ: The members that have life cannot but feel the smart of any distempering attempt: For abscision is destruction: The members die that are separated from the body. And if there be but any *obstruction* or *hinderance* of communion, they will be painfull or unusefull. He *feeleth* in himself

self the reason of all those strict commands, and earnest exhortations, 1 Cor. 1. 10. Now I beseech you Brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joyed together in the same mind, and in the same judgement, Phil. 2. 1, 2, 3, 4. If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies; fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same Love, being of one accord; of one mind: Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind; let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things; but every man also on the things of others, Ephes. 1. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all: But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Read also Ephes. 4. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. 1 Cor. 12. throughout. He looketh at uncharitableness, and divisions with more abhorrence, than weak Christians do at drunkenness or whoredom, or such other hainous sin. He feareth such dreadfull warnings, as Acts 20. 29, 30. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous Wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock: Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking
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perverse things, to draw away Disciples after them. And he cannot slight such a vehement exhortation, as Rom. 16. 17, 18. Now I beseech you Brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. Therefore he is so far from being a divider himself, that when he seeth any one making divisions among Christians, he looketh on him as on one that is slashing and mangling the body of his dearest friend; or as on one that is setting fire on his house, and therefore doth all that he can to quench it: As knowing the confusion and calamity to which it tendeth. He is of a *Christian*, and therefore of a truly *Catholick* spirit; that is, He maketh not himself a member of a divided *Party* or a *Sect*: He regardeth the interest and welfare of the *body*, the universal Church, above the interest or prosperity of any party whatsoever: And he will do nothing for a party which is injurious to the *whole*, or to the Christian cause. The very names of *Sects* and *Parties* are displeasing to him; And he could wish that there were no name but that of *Christians* among us; save only the necessary names of the criminal, such as that of the *Nicolaitans*, Rev. 2. 6. 15. By which those that are to be avoided by Christians must be known. Christianity is confined to so narrow a compass in the world, that he is unwilling to contract it yet into a narrower. The greatest party of divided Christians, whether it be the *Greeks* or *Papists*, is too small a body for him to take for the *Catholick* (or Universal) Church: He admireth at the blindness
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and cruelty of faction, that can make men damn all the rest of the Church, for the interest of their proper sect; and take all those as *no Christians* that are better Christians than themselves. Especially the Papists, who unchurch all the Church of Christ, except their *Sect*; and make it as necessary to salvation to be a subject of the Pope as to be a Christian; and when by their great corruption and abuses of Christianity, they have more need of *charitable* censures themselves than almost any sort of Christians, yet are they the boldest condemners of all others. The *confirmed Christian* can difference between the strong and weak, the sound and unsound members of the Church, without dismembring any, and without unwarrantable separations from any. He will worship God in the purest manner he can; and locally joyn with those Assemblies, where all things considered, he may most honour God, and receive most edification; and will not *sin* for communion with any: He will sufficiently difference between a holy orderly Assembly, and a corrupt disordered one; and between an able faithfull Pastor, and an ignorant or worldly hireling: And he desireth that the Pastors of the Church may make that due separation by the holy Discipline of Christ, which may prevent the peoples disorderly separation. But for all this, he will not deny his presence upon just occasion to any Christian Congregation that worshipeth God in truth, though with many modal imperfections, so be it they impose no *sin* upon him as necessary to his communion with them. Nor will he deny the *spiritual communion* of faith and Love to those that he holdeth not *local* communion with: He knoweth that all our worship of God is sinfully imper-

lect; and that it is a dividing principle to hold, that we may joyn with none that worship God in a faulty manner: for then we must joyn with none on earth: He knoweth that his presence in the worship of God, is no sign of his approbation of all the failings of Pastors or people in their personal or modal imperfections; as long as he joyneth not in a worship so corrupt as to be it self unacceptable to God. While men who are all imperfect and corrupt are the worshippers, the manner of their worship will be such as they, in some degree imperfect and corrupt. The solid Christian hath his eye upon all the Churches in the world, in the determining of such questions: He considereth what worship is offered to God in the Churches of the several parties of Christians, the Greeks, Armenians, Abassines, Lutherans, &c. as well as what is done in the Country where he liveth: and he considereth whether God *disown* and *reject* the worship of almost all the Churches in the world, or not: For he dare no further reject them than God rejecteth them: nor will he voluntarily separate from those Assemblies where the presence of Christ, in his Spirit and acceptance, yet remaineth. And his fuller acquaintance with the gracious nature, office and tenderness of Christ, together with greater Love to his Brethren, doth cause him in this to judge more gently than young censorious Christians do. And his humble acquaintance with his *own* infirmities, maketh him the more compassionate to others. If he should think that God would reject all that *order* not, and *word* not their prayers aright, he would be afraid of being rejected himself, who is still conscious of greater faultiness in his own prayers, than a meer defect in *words* and *order*; even of a great defectiveness in
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that faith, and desire, and love, and zeal, and reverence which should be manifested in prayer. Though he be more apprehensive than others of the excellency and necessity of the holiness and spirituality of the soul in worship; yet withall he is more *judicious* and *charitable* than the pievish and passionate infant Christians, who think that God doth judge as they do, and seeth no grace where they see none; and taketh all to be superstitious or fanatical, that differ from their opinions or manner of worship; or that he is as ready to call every error in the *method* or the *words* of prayer, *Idolatry* or *Witworship*, as those are that speak not what they know, but what they have heard some Teachers whom they reverence say before them. He that dwelleth in Love, doth dwell in God, and God in him, and he that dwelleth in God, is liker to be best acquainted with his mind concerning his children and his worship, than he that dwelleth in wrath, and pride, and partiality.

2. But the *weak Christian* (though so far as he hath grace, he is of the same mind, and abhorreth discord and division among the flock of Christ, yet) being more *dark*, and *selfish*, and *distempered*, he is much more prone to unwarrantable separations and divisions than the stronger Christian is. He is narrower sighted, and looketh little further than his own acquaintance, and the Country where he liveth; and mindeth not sufficiently the general state of the Churches through the world, nor understandeth well the interest of Christ and Christianity in the earth. His knowledge and experience being small, his charity also is but small; and a little thing tempteth him to condemn another, and aggravate his faults, and think him unworthy

of the communion of the Saints. He is much more sensible of the *judgement*, and *affections*, and *concernments* of those few with whom he doth converse, and that are of his opinion, than of the *judgement* and *practice*, and *concernments* of the universal Church. He knoweth not how to *prefer* the *judgements* and *holiness* of some that he thinketh *more excellent* than the rest, without much undervaluing and censuring of all others, that are not of their opinion: He cannot chuse the actual local communion of the best society, without some unjust contempt of others, or separation from them. He hath not so much knowledge as may sufficiently acquaint him with his ignorance; And therefore he is apt to be unreasonably confident of his present apprehensions, and to think verily that all his own conceptions are the certain truth; and to think them ignorant or ungodly, or very weak at least that differ from him. For he hath not thoroughly and impartially studied all that may be said on the other side. The Authority of his chosen Teacher and sect is greater with him (if he fall into that way) than the Authority of all the most wise and holy persons in the world besides. What the Scripture speaketh of the unbelieving world, he is apt to apply to all those of the Church of Christ, that are not of his mind and party: And when Christ commandeth us to come out of the *world*, he is prone to understand it of coming out from the Church into some stricter and narrower society; and is apt with the Papists, to appropriate the name and priviledges of the Church, to his party alone, and to condemn all others. Especially if the Church-Governours be carnal and self-seeking or otherwise very culpable, and
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if Discipline be neglected, and if prophaneness be not sufficiently discountenanced, and godliness promoted; he thinketh that such a Church is no Church, but a prophane society: God hath taught him by repentance to see the mischief of ungodliness; but he yet wanteth that experience which is needfull to make him know the mischiefs of Church-divisions: He had too much experience himself of the evil of prophaneness before his conversion: but he hath not tryed the evil of Schism; and without some sad experience of its fruits, in himself or others, he will hardly know it as it should be known. Because it is the custome of some malignant enemies of godliness, to call the godly *Hereticks*, *Schismaticks*, *factions*, *Secretaries*, &c. therefore the very names do come into credit with him; and he thinks there are no such persons in the world, or that there is no danger of any such crimes: Till he be taught by sad experience that the professors of sincerity are in as much danger on that side as on the other; and that the Church (as well as Christ) doth suffer between two thieves, the *Prophane* and the *Dividers*. Paul was unjustly called the ring-leader of a Sect, *Acts* 24. 5. and Christianity called a *Heresie* and a *Sect* every where spoken against, *Acts* 28. 22. & 24. 14. But for all that, *Heresie* is a fruit of the flesh, *Gal.* 5. 20. and some of them called *dammable*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 1. and they are the tryal of the Church, to difference the *approved* members from the chaff, 1 *Cor.* 11. 19. And an obstinate Heretick is to be *avoided* by true Believers, *Titus* 3. 10. And the Pharisees and Sadduces are well reputed to be several *Sects*, *Acts* 5. 17. & 15. 5. & 26. 5. And *dividers* and *divisions* are justly branded in Scripture, as aforesaid: There

must be no Schism in the body of Christ, 1 Cor. 12. 25. The following of selected Teachers in a way of division from the rest, or opposition to them, doth shew that men are carnal in too great a measure, though it be not in predominancy as in the prophane. 2 Cor. 3. 1, 2, 3. And I Brethren could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ: I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: For whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollo, are ye not carnal? How much more when he that is for Paul doth censure and rail at Cephas and Apollo? He that hath seen the course of men professing godliness in England in this age, may easily and sadly know how prone weak Christians are to unjust separations and divisions, and what are the effects: He that had heard many zealous in prayer, and other duties, and the next year see them turning Quakers, and railing in the open Congregations at the ablest, holiest, self-denying Ministers of Christ, and at their flocks, with a [Come down thou deceiver, thou hireling, thou wolf; ye are all greedy doggs, &c.] and shall see how yet poor souls run into that reviling and irrational Sect, (to say nothing of all other Sects among us) will no longer doubt whether the weak be inclinable to Schism, but will rather lament the dangerousness of their station; and know that all is not done when a sinner is converted from an ungodly state. Study the reason of those three texts, Ephes. 4. 13, 14, 15, 16. For the edifying the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and
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of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man; unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carryed about with every wind of Doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lye in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in Love may grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joyned together and compacted, by that which every joyn supplyeth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, to the Edifying of it self in love. Here you see the children are apt to be carryed into dividing parties. And that they are aptest to be Proud, and that way to miscarry, see 1 Tim. 3. 6. Not a novice (or raw young Christian) lest being lifted up with Pride, he fall into the condemnation of the Devil; And then followeth the effect, Act. 20. 30. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away Disciples after them. I would not have you groundlessly accuse any Christian with a charge of Pride; But I must tell you, that the childish Pride of apparel, is a petty business, in comparison of that Pride which many in sordid attire have manifested, who in their ignorance do rage and foam out words of falsehood and reproach against Christs Ministers and Servants, as if they were all fools or impious in comparison of them; speaking evil of that which they never understood: The lifting up the Heart above the people of the Lord, in the Pride of supposed Holiness, is incomparably worse, than Pride of Learning, honour, greatness, wit or wealth. Nay it hath oft been to me a matter of wonder to observe how little all those plain and
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urgent Texts of Scripture, which cry down Division, do work upon many of the younger Christians, who yet are as quickly toucht as any, with a Text that speaketh against prophaneness and lukewarmness. In a word, they are often of the temper of James and John, when they would fain have had Christ have revenged himself on his opposers by fire from Heaven : They know not what manner of Spirit they are of, Luk. 9. 55. They think verily that it is a holy zeal for God, when it is the boiling of passion, pride and selfishness : They feel not the sense of such words as Christs, Joh. 17. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. I pray also for them who shall believe on me, through their word ; that they All may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the World may believe that thou hast sent me, &c.

3. And as for the *seeming Christians*, in this they are of several sorts. When their *carnal interest* lyeth in compliance with the Major part and stronger side, then no men do more cry up *Unity and Obedience* : what a noise do many thousand Papist-Prelates, Jesuites and Fryers, make with these two words throughout the world. *Unity and Obedience* (unto them upon their terms) do signifie Principally *their worldly greatness, wealth and power*. But if the Hypocrite be engaged in point of honour or other carnal interest on the *suffering side*, or be out of hope of any advantage, in the common rode ; then no man is so much for separation and singularity as he. For he must needs be noted for some body in the world, and this is the chief way that he findeth to accomplish it. And so being *lifted up with pride, he falleth into*
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the Condemnation of the Devil, and becomes a fire-brand in the Church.

LIII. 1. *A Christian indeed* is not only zealous for the Unity and Concord of Believers, but he seeketh it on the right terms, and in the way, that is fittest to attain it. *Unity, Peace and Concord* are like *Piety and Honesty*, things so unquestionably good, that there are scarce any men of reason and common sobriety, that ever were heard to oppose them *Directly* and *for themselves*: And therefore all that are *enemies* to them are yet *pretenders* to them; and oppose them 1. *In their causes only*, 2. *Or covertly* and under some other name. Every man would have *Unity, Concord and Peace* in his own way and upon his own terms: But if the right terms had been understood and consented to as sufficient, the Christian world had not lain so many hundred years in the sin and shame and ruines as it hath done. And the cause of all is, that *Christians indeed*, that have clear confirmed judgements, and strength of grace, are very few; and for number and strength unable to perswade or overrule the *weak*, the *passionate* and the *falsehearted* worldly hypocritical multitude; who bear down all the counsels and endeavours of the wise.

The judicious faithful Christian knoweth, that there are three degrees or sorts of *Christian Communion*, which have their several terms: 1. The *universal-church Communion*, which all *Christians* as such must hold among themselves. 2. *Particular Church-communion*, which those that are conjoynd for *personal Communion* in Worship do hold under the same Pastors and among themselves. 3. The extraordinary intimate communion that some Christians hold together, who are *bosome friends*,

friends, or are specially able and fit to be helpful and comfortable to each other.

The last concerneth not our present business: we must hold Church-communion with many that are unfit to be our *bosome friends*, and that have no eminency of parts or piety, or any strong-perswading evidence of sincerity. But the terms of *Catholick Communion*, he knoweth, are such as these. 1. They must be such as were the terms of Church Communion in the dayes of the Apostles. 2. They must be such as are plainly and certainly expressed in the holy Scriptures. 3. And such as the *Universal Church* hath in some ages since been actually agreed in. 4. And those points are likeliest to be such, which all the differing parties of Christians are agreed in as *Necessary* to Communion to this day (so we call not those Christians that deny the essentials of Christianity) 5. Every man in the former ages of the Church was admitted to this *Catholick Church-communion*, who in the *Baptismal Vow or Covenant*, gave up himself to God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; as his Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, his Owner, Governour and Father, renouncing the flesh, the world and the Devil. And more particularly, as man hath an *Understanding*, a *Will* and an *executive power*, which must all be sanctified to God, so the *Creed* was the particular Rule for the *Credenda* or things to be Believed, and the *Lords Prayer* for the *Petenda* or things to be Willed, Loved and Desired, and the Ten Commandments for the *agenda* or things to be done: so that to Consent to these Rules particularly, and to all the Holy Scriptures implicitly and generally, was the thing then required to *Catholick Communion*. The belief of the doctrine being necessary for

for the *sanctifying* of the *heart* and *life*, the Belief of so much is of Necessity, without which the *Heart* cannot be *sanctified*, or devoted in Covenant to God our Creator, Redeemer and Regenerater ; and without which we cannot *Love God* (as reconciled to us in Christ) *above* all, and our neighbours as our selves. So that, *in a word*, he that can tell what the Baptismal Vow or Covenant is, can tell what is necessary to that *Catholic Church-communion*, which belongeth to *Christians as Christians*, at how great a distance soever they dwell from one another.

And, then for *Particular Church-communion*, which is *local* and *personal*, it is moreover necessary,
 1. That each member acknowledge and submit to the same Pastors. 2. That they be guided by them in the convenient circumstances and adjuncts of Worship : For if some persons will not consent or submit to the *same Pastors* that the body of the Church consenteth and submiteth to, they cannot have communion particularly and locally with that Church, nor are they members of it ; no more than they can be members of the same Kingdom that have not the same King : And there being no solemn worship performed but by the Ministry of those Pastors, they cannot joyn in the *worship* that joyn not with the *Minister*. And if some members will not *consent* and *submit* to the necessary determination of the adjuncts or external modes of worship, they cannot joyn in local, particular Church-communion where that Worship is performed : As if the Pastor and the body of the Church will meet in such a *place*, at such a *day* and *hour*, and some members will not meet with them at that *place* and *day* and *hour*, they cannot possibly

possibly then have their local personal communion. Or if the Pastor will use such a *Translation* of the Scriptures, or such a *Version* of the Psalms, or such a *Method* in *Preaching* and *Prayer*, or such *Notes* or *books* and other like helps; if any members will not submit, nor hold Communion with the rest, unless that *Translation*, or *Version*, or *Method* of *Preaching*, or *Praying*, or *Notes* or *Books* be laid aside, he cannot have Communion while he refuseth it. If the Pastor and all the rest will not yield to him, he must joyn with some other Church that he can agree with. And as long as the *Catholick Church* communion is maintained (which consisteth in *Unity* of the *Christian-covenant*, or of *Christianity*, or of *Faith*, *Love* and *Obedience*) the difference of modes and circumstances between *particular Churches* must be allowed without any breach of *Charity* or without disowning one another : And he that cannot be a member of *one particular Church*, may quietly joyn himself to another without condemning that which he dissenteth from, so far as to hinder his *Catholick* Communion with it; (even as among the *Papists*, men may be of which *Order* of *Religious* persons they best like, as long as they submit to their *General Government*.) And here the *strong judicious Christian* for his part will never be guilty of Church-divisions : For, 1. He will make nothing necessary to Church-communion, which any *sober*, *pious*, *peaceable* minds shall have any just reason to except against, or which may not well be manifested to be for the *Edification* of the *Church* : 2. And he will bear with the *weak* dissenters so far as will stand with the *peace* and *welfare* of the *Church*. 3. And he

he will particularly give leave to such weak ones as cannot yet hold communion with him, being peaceable, and not promoting heresie, ungodliness or sedition to joyn to another Church where they can hold communion, with peace to their own Consciences: as long as they continue their foresaid Catholick-communion. For the strong know that they must not only [*bear with*] but [*bear*] the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves, but every one of them to please his neighbour for good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself. —

And so they will receive one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God, not despising the weak, nor rejecting them that God receiveth. Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3, 7. & 14. 1, 2, 3, 4, 17, 18. And thus you may see how easie a matter it were to unite and reconcile all the Christian World, if the principles of the judicious confirmed Christian might be received and prevail; and that it is not he that is the cause of the abundance of sin and calamity which divisions have caused, and continued in the Church. But that which now seemeth an impossible thing may quickly and easily be accomplished if all were such as he: And that the difficulty of reconciling and uniting Christians, lyeth not first in finding out the terms, but in making men fit to receive and practice the terms from the beginning received by the Churches: This is *Livineus* his *Quod semper, ubiq; & ab omnibus receptum est.* (supposing still that the Magistrate be submitted to by every soul, even as he is the keeper of both talles, Rom. 13. 1, 2, 3.)

2. But the weak Christian is too easily tempted to be the divider of the Church, by expecting that it be united upon his impossible or unrighteous terms.

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Sometime he will be *Orthodox overmuch*, or rather *wise in his own conceit*, Rom. 12. 16. and then none are judged fit for his communion that be not of his opinion, in controverted Doctrinals (e. g. predestination, the manner of the work of grace, freewill, perseverance, and abundance such :) Sometime he will be *righteous overmuch*, or (to speak more properly) *superstitious*: And then none are fit for his communion, that Worship not God in that method and manner for circumstantialia, which he esteemeth best: And his *charity* is so *weak* that it freeth him not from *thinking evil*, 1 Cor. 13. and so *narrow* that it covereth not either many or great infirmities. The more need he hath of the forbearance and charity of others, the less can he bear or forbear others himself. The *strong Christian* must bear the infirmities of the *weak*; but the *weak Christian* can scarce bear with the *weak* or *strong*: Nay he is oft too impatient with some of their *virtues* and *duties*, as well as with their *infirmities*. He is of too private a spirit, and too insensible of the publick interest of the Church of Christ. And therefore he must have all the World come over to him, and be conformed to his opinion and party, and unite upon his mistaken narrow terms if they will have Communion with him: I mean, it is thus with him when the temptation on that side prevaieth. And sometime he is overcome with the temptation of *Domination*, to make his judgement the Rule to others: and then he quite overvalueth his own understanding, and will needs be judge of all the controversies in the Church; and taketh it as unsufferable, if wiser and better men do not take him as infallible and in every thing observe his will.

will. And when his brethren give him the reason of their dissent, as his judgement is not clear enough to understand them, so his passion and partiality are too strong to suffer his judgement to do its part. And thus oft-times he is a greater hindrance to the Churches Unity, than the enemies of the Church themselves: For he hath not judgement enough to guide him the right way, and yet he hath so much zeal as will not suffer him to keep his errours to himself.

3. And all these distempers that are but in a lower degree in the *weak Christian*, are predominant in the *Hypocrite*. The Church shall have no concord or peace if he can hinder it, but what is consistent with his carnal interest, his honour, or wealth, or dignity in the world. The pride and covetousness which rule himself, he would have to make the terms of concord, and to rule all others. It is *Hypocrites* in the Church that are the greatest cause of discord and divisions; having selfish spirits, principles and ends, and having alwaies a work of their own to do, which suits not well with the work of Christ; and yet Christs work must be subjected to it, and ordered and overruled by it. And while they pretend to go to the Scriptures, or to Councils, or Fathers for their reasons, indeed they go first for them to their worldly interest; and then would fain hire or press the Scripture, Church or Fathers to serve their turn, and come in as witnesses on their side. And thus the Church, as well as Christ, is betrayed by the covetous Judas's of his own family: And the servants of the world, the flesh and Devil, that take up the livery of Christ, and usurp the name and honour of Christians, do more effectually hinder the

concord and prosperity of the Church, than any open enemies do. And those that are indeed *no Christians*, do cause Christianity to be reproached: Even as Spies and Traitors that are hired by the enemy to take up arms in the Army which they fight against, that they may betray it by their fraud, and do more harm to it, by raising mutinies, and by false conduct, than a multitude of professed enemies could have done. It is *proud*, and *worldly* carnal Hypocrites, that hinder most the concord of Believers.

LIV. 1. *A confirmed Christian is of a peaceable spirit.* He is not matterly, domineering, turbulent, hurtfull, cruell, seditious, factious, or contentious. He is like ripened fruits, that are *mellow* and *sweet*, when the younger, greener fruits are *sowre* and *harsh*. He is not *wise in his own conceit*, Rom. 12. 16. and therefore not over urgent in obtruding his conceits on others, nor quarrellsome with all that cannot entertain them; nor will he easily lay mens salvation or damnation, no nor the *Churches peace*, upon them. He is *kindly affectioned to others with brotherly love*, *yea, loveth his neighbour as himself*, Rom. 12. 10. & 13. 9, 10. And therefore he *doth to others as he would they should do to him*; and useth them as he would be used by them: And then how far they are like to suffer by him, you may easily judge. For *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour*, Rom. 13. 10. He is above the portion of the worldling, and a contemner of that vanity which carnal men account their felicity; and therefore he preferreth *love and quietness* before it; and can *lose his right* when the interest of *Love and Peace* requireth it. He is become as a *little child* in his conversion, *Matth. 18. 3.* and is *low and little* in his

his own eyes, and therefore contendeth not for superiority or preheminance, either in place or power, or reputation of his learning, wisdom or piety; but in honour preferreth others before himself, Rom. 12. 10. He mindeth not high things, but condescendeth to men of low estate, Rom. 12. 16. and therefore will not contend for estimation or precedency, nor scramble to be highest, though he rise by the ruines of mens bodies and souls. If it be possible, as much as lyeth in him, he will live peaceably with all men, Rom. 12. 18. For he is not one that by word or deed will avenge himself; but when the wrath of others is up like a blustering storm, he giveth place to it, he boweth before it, or goeth out of the way, Rom. 12. 19. If his enemy hunger, he feedeth him; if he thirst, he giveth him drink, when oppressors would deprive not only an enemy, but the righteous of their meat and drink: and thus he melterh his hardened enemies, by heaping kindnesses upon them when they are wrathfull, and proud, and contentious, and do him wrong, or use provoking words against him, he is not overcome of their evil to imitate them, but he overcometh their evil with his good, Rom. 12. 20, 21. If God have given him more knowledge and abilities than others, he doth not presently set up himself to be admired for it, nor speak disdainfully and contemptuously of those that are not of his mind: But he sheweth the eminency of his wisdom, with meekness by the works of a good conversation, and by doing better than the unwiser do, James 3. from verse 1. to 13. He is endued with the wisdom from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easie to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruit, without partiality (or wavering in persecution; as

Dr. Hammond renders it) *and without hypocrisie.* And thus the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace, Jam. 3. 17, 18. As he is taught of God to love his brother, 1 Thel. 4. 9. So that same teaching with experience of the effects assureth him, that they that pretend to be wiser and better than others, when they have bitter, envious zeal and strife in their hearts, they vainly glory and lie against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual and devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work, James 3. 14, 15, 16. (Read but the story of the Jewish Zealots in Josephus, and the heretical Zealots in all ages of the Church, and you will perceive the truth of this) when such quarrellsome spirits are filling the Church with contentions or vexations about their meats, and drinks, and daies, &c. the Christian indeed understandeth that the Kingdom of God consisteth not of such things as these, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of (wise and sober) men. Therefore he followeth after things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edifie another; and will not for meats, &c. destroy the work of God, Rom. 14. 17, 18, 19, 20. He stayeth not till peace be offered him, or brought home to him, but he followeth peace with all men, as well as holiness, Heb. 12. 14. If it fly from him, he pursueth it: if it be denied him, he seeketh it, and will not refuse to stoop to the poorest for it, and to beg it of his inferiours, if it were upon his knees, rather than be denied it, and live an unpeaceable disquiet life, Psal. 34. 14. For he believeth, that blessed are the Peace-makers, for they shall

shall be called the children of God, Matth. 5. 9.

2. And the weak Christian hath the same spirit, and therefore the love of peace is most predominant in him: But alas he is too easily tempted into Religious passions, discontents, contentious disputations, quarrellsome and opprobrious words; and his judgement lamentably darkened and perverted whenever contentious zeal prevaieth, and passions do perturb the quiet and orderly operations of his soul. He wanteth both the knowledge and the experience and the mellowness of spirit, which riper Christians have attained: He hath a less degree of Charity, and is less acquainted with the mischiefs of unpeaceableness: And therefore it is the common course of young professors, to be easily tempted into unpeaceable waies: and when they have long tryed them (if they prove not Hypocrites) to come off at last upon experience of the evils of them, and so the young Christians conjunct with some hypocrites make up the rigorous, fierce, contentious and vexatious party, and the aged riper Christians make up the holy, moderate, healing party, that groan and pray for the Churches peace, and mourn in secret both for the ungodliness and violence which they cannot heal. Yea the difference is much apparent in the Books and Sermons which each of them is best pleased with. The ripe experienced Christian loveth those Sermons that kindle Love, and tend to Peace; and love such healing Books as do narrow differences, and tend to reconcile and heal (such as Bishop Halls Peace-maker, and Pax terræ, and all his writings; and Bishop Davenants, Bishop Mortons, and Bishop Hall's Pacificatory Epistles to Durex, and Mr. Burroughs's Irenicon, Ludov. Crocius, Amyraldus, Junius, Pareus's, and many

other *Irenicons* written by forein Divines, to say nothing of those that are upon single controversies. But the younger sowre uncharitable Christians are better pleased with such Books and Sermons as call them aloud to be very zealous for this or that controverted point of Doctrine, or for or against some circumstance of worship or Church discipline, or about some fashions, or customs, or indifferent things, as if the Kingdom of God were in them, *Rom.* 14. 1, 2, 15, 16.

3. But the *seeming Christian* is either a meer temporizer, that will be of that Religion whatever it be which is most in fashion, or which the higher powers are of, or which will cost him least : Or else he will run into the other extream, and lift up himself by *affected singularities*, and by making a bustle and stir in the world about some small and controverted point, and careth not to sacrifice the peace and safety of the Church, to the honour of his own opinions. And as *small* as the Christian Church is, he must be of a *smaller society* than it, that he may be sure to be amongst the best ; while indeed he hath no sincerity at all, but placeth his hopes in being of the *right Church* or *Party*, or *Opinion* : And for his *Party* or *Church*, he burneth with a feverish kind of zeal, and is ready to call for fire from Heaven ; and to deceive him, the Devil sendeth him some from Hell, to consume those that are not of his mind : Yet doth he bring it as an Angel of light to defend the *Truth* and *Church* of *Christ* : And indeed when the Devil will be the *Defender* of *Truth*, or of the *Church*, or of *Peace*, or *Order*, or *Piety*. he doth it with the *most burning* zeal : You may know him by the *means* he useth. He *sendeth* the *Church* by forbidding the people to
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read the Scriptures in a known tongue, and by imprisoning and burning the soundest and holiest members of it, and abusing the most learned faithful Pastors, and defendeth the flock by casting out the Shepherds, and such like means; as the murders of the *Waldenses*, and the Massacres of *France* and *Ireland*, and the *Spanish* Inquisition, and *Queen Maries* Bonfires, and the Powder-plot; yea and the *Munster*, and the *English* rage and phrensies, may give you fuller notice of: He that hath no *Holiness*, nor *Charity* to be zealous for, will be zealous for his *Church*, or *Seet*, or *Customs*, or *Opinions*. And then this zeal must be the evidence of his piety: and so the Inquisitors have thought they have religiously served God, by murdering his servants; and it is the badge of their honour to be the Devils hang-men, to execute his malice on the members of Christ; and all this is done in zeal for Religion by irreligious Hypocrites. There is no standing before the malicious zeal of a graceless Pharisee, when it riseth up for his carnal interest, or the honour, and traditions, and customs of his Seet, Luk. 6. 7. And they were filled with madness, and communed with one another what they might do to Jesus, Luke 4. 28. Acts 5. 17. & 13. 45. John 15. 2. Rom. 10. 2. Phil. 3. 6. Acts 26. 10, 11. The zeal of a true Christian consumeth himself with grief to see the madness of the wicked: But the zeal of the Hypocrite consumeth others, that by the light of the fire his Religiousness may be seen: You may see the Christians fervent Love to God, by the fervent flames which he can suffer for his sake: And you may see the fervent Love of the Hypocrite, by the flames which he kindleth for others: By these he cryeth with *Jebu*, Come and see my zeal for the Lord, 2 King. 10. 16. 2 Sam. 21. 2. L 4 L V. 1. A

L V. 1. A *Christian* indeed is one that most highly esteemeth and regardeth the interest of God and mens salvation in the world; and taketh all things else to be inconsiderable in comparison of these. The interest of Great men, and Nobles, and Commanders; yea and his own in corporal respects, as riches, honour, health and life, he taketh to be things unworthy to be named in competition with the interest of *Christ* and *Souls*. The thing that his heart is most set upon in the world, is that God be glorified, and that the world acknowledge him their King, and that his Laws be obeyed, and that darkness, and infidelity, and ungodliness may be cast out; and that pride, and worldliness, and fleshly lusts may not hurry the miserable world unto perdition. It is one of the saddest and most amazing thoughts that ever entred into his heart, to consider how much of the world is overwhelmed in ignorance and wickedness, and how great the Kingdom of the Devil is in comparison of the Kingdom of *Christ*: that God should forsake so much of his Creation: that Christianity should not be owned in above the sixth part of the world; and Popish pride and ignorance, with the corruptions of many other Sects, and the worldly carnal minds of Hypocrites, should rob *Christ* of so much of this little part, and leave him so small a flock of holy ones, that must possess the Kingdom. His soul consenteth to the Method of the Lords Prayer, as prescribing us the order of our Desires: And in his prayers he seeketh first (in order of estimation and intention) the *Hallowing of Gods name*, and the coming of his Kingdom, and the doing of his Will on Earth as it is done in Heaven, before his daily bread, or the pardon of his sins, or the deliverance of his

own soul from temptations and the evil one. Mark him in his prayers, and you shall find that he is, above other men taken up in earnest petitions for the *Conversion* of the *Heathen* and *Infidel* world, and the undeceiving of Mahometans, Jews and Hereticks, and the clearing of the Church from those Papal tyrannies, and fopperies and corruptions, which make Christianity hateful or contemptible in the eyes of the Heathen and Mahometan world, and hinder their Conversion. No man so much lamenteth the Pride, and Covetousness, and Laziness, and Unfaithfulness of the Pastors of the Church, because of the doleful consequents to the Gospel, and the souls of men; and yet with all possible honor to the sacred office which they thus prophane. No man so heartily lamenteth the contentions and divisions among Christians, and the doleful destruction of charity thereby: It grieveth him to see how much selfishness, pride and malice prevaleth with them that should shine as lights in a benighted world, and how obstinate and incurable they seem to be, against the plainest means, and humblest motions, for the Churches edification and peace, *Psal.* 120. 6, 7. & 122. 6. *Phil.* 2. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Psal.* 119. 136. *Zeph.* 3. 18. *Ezek.* 9. 4. *Psal.* 69. 9. *Job.* 2. 17. He envieth not Kings and Great men their dominions wealth or pleasure; nor is he at all ambitious to participate in their tremendous exaltation: But the thing that his heart is set upon is, that the *Kingdoms of the World* may all become the *Kingdoms of the Lord*, *Rev.* 11. 15. and that the Gospel may every where have free course and be glorified, and the Preachers of it be encouraged, or at least delivered from unreasonable wicked men, *2 Thes.* 3. 1, 2. Little careth he who is uppermost

permost or conquereth in the world, or who goeth away with the preferments or riches of the earth (supposing that he fail not of *his duty to his Rulers*), so that it may go well with the affairs of the Gospel, and souls be but helped in the way to Heaven. Let God be honoured, and souls converted and edified, and he is satisfied. This is it that maketh the Times good in his account: He thinketh not as the proud and carnal Church of Rome, that the Times are best when the Clergy is richest and greatest in the world, and overtop Princes, and claim the secular power, and live in worldly pomp and pleasures: But when holiness most aboundeth, and the members of Christ are likeliest to their Head, and when multitudes of sincere believers are daily added to the Church; and when the *Mercy and Holiness of God* shine forth, in the *Numbers and Purity* of his Saints. It is no *Riches or Honour* that can be heaped upon himself or any others, that make the Times seem good to him, if *Knowledge and Godliness* are discountenanced and hindered, and the way to Heaven is made more difficult; if *Atheism, infidelity, ungodliness, pride and malignity* do prevail; and truth and sincerity are driven into the dark, and when *he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey*, Isa. 59. 15. When *the godly man ceaseth, and the faithful fail from among the children of men; when every man speaketh vanity to his neighbour, and the poor are oppressed, and the needy sigh, and the wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted*, Psal. 12. 1, 2, 5, 8. The Times are Good, when the Men are good; and Evil when the Men are evil, be they never so great or prosperous. As *Nehemiah* when he was Cup-bearer to the King himself,

himself, yet wept and mourned for the desolations of *Jerusalem*, *Neb.* 1. 3, 4. & 2. 2, 3. Whoever prospereth, the Times are ill when there is a famine of the Word of the Lord, and when the chief of the Priests and people do transgress, and mock Gods messengers, and despise his words, and misuse his Prophets, 2 Chron. 36. 14, 16. Amos 8. 11, 12. When the Apostles are charged to speak no more in the name of Christ, *Act.* 4. 18. & 5. 40. It is a text enough to make one tremble, to think into what a desperate condition the Jews were carryed by a partial selfish zeal, 1 *Thes.* 2. 15, 16. who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own Prophets, and have persecuted us, and they please not God, and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved; to fill up their sin alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost. When the interest of themselves and their own Nation and Priesthood did so far blind and pervert them, that they durst persecute the Preachers of the Gospel, and forbid them to speak to the people that they may be saved, it was a sign that wrath was come upon them to the uttermost: A Christian indeed had rather be without *Jereboams* Kingdom, than make *Israel* to sin, & make the basest of the people Priests, and stretch out his hand against the Prophet of the Lord, 1 *King.* 12. 30, 31. & 13. 4. He had rather labour with his hands; as *Paul*, and live in poverty and rags, so that the Gospel may be powerfully and plentifully preached, and holiness abound, than to live in all the prosperity of the world, with the hinderance of mens salvation. He had rather be a door-keeper in the house of God, than be a Lord in the Kingdom of Satan: He cannot rise by the ruins of the Church, nor feed upon those

those morsels that are the price of the blood of souls.

2. And the *weakest Christian* is in all this of the same mind ; saving that *private* and *selfish* interest is not so *fully* overcome, nor so *easily* and *resolutely* denied, *Luk. 14. 26, 33.*

3. But here the *Hypocrite* sheweth the falseness of his heart : His own interest is it that chooseth his Religion ; and, that he may not torment himself by being wicked in the open light, he maketh himself believe that whatsoever is most for his own interest, is most pleasing unto God, and most for the good of souls, and the interest of the Gospel ; so that the carnal Romish Clergiee can perswade their Consciences, that all the darkness and superstitions of their Kingdom, and all their Opposition of the light of the Gospel of Christ, do make for the honour of God and the good of souls, because they uphold their tyrannie, wealth and pomp and pleasure. Or if they cannot perswade their Consciences to believe so gross a lye, let *Church* and *Souls* speed how they will, they will favour nothing that favoureth not their interest and ends : And the *interest* of the *flesh* and *spirit*, of the *world* and *Christ*, are so repugnant, that commonly such worldlings take the serious practice of Godliness, for the most hateful thing, and the serious practisers of it, for the most unsufferable persons, *Act. 7. 57. & 21. 36. & 22. 23. & 24. 5, 6. Job. 19. 15.* The enmity of interests, with the enmity of nature, between the *Womans* and the *Serpents* seed, will maintain that warfare to the end of the world, in which the Prince of the powers of darkness, shall seem to prevail, (as he did against our Crucified Lord :) but he shall be overcome by his *own* *successes*, and the just shall conquer by *patience* when they seem
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most conquered. The *name* and *form*, and *image* of Religion, the carnal hypocrite doth not only bear, but *favour*, and himself accept: But the *Life* and *serious practice* he abhorreth, as inconsistent with his worldly interest and ends. For *these* he can find in his heart, with *Ahab* to hate and imprison *Micaiah*, and prefer his four hundred flattering Prophets, 1 *King.* 22. 6, 8, 24, 27. If *Luther* will touch the Popes Crown and the Fryers Bellies, they will not scruple to Oppose and ruine, both him and all such Preachers in the World, if they were able, *John* 11. 48. 50. *Acts* 5. 28.

LVI. 1. *A Christian indeed* is one whose *Holiness* usually maketh him an eyesore to the *ungodly world*, and his *charity*, and *peaceableness*, and *moderation* maketh him to be censured as not *strict enough*, by the superstitious and dividing sects of Christians. For seeing the Church hath suffered between these two sorts of opposers, ever since the suffering of Christ himself, it cannot be but the *solid Christian* offend them *both*, because he hath that which *both* dislike. All the *ungodly* hate him for his *holiness*, which is cross to their interest and way; and all the *Dividers* will censure him for that *universal charity*, and *moderation* which is against their factious and destroying zeal (described, *Jam.* 3.) Even Christ himself was not *strict enough* (in superstitious observances) for the ceremonious, zealous Pharisees: He *transgressed* (with his *Disciples*) the *tradition of the Elders*, in neglecting their observances, who transgressed the commandment of God by their tradition, *Matth.* 15. 2, 3. He was not *strict enough* in their uncharitable observation of the Sabbath day, *Matth.* 12. 2. *John* that was eminent for falling, they said,

said, *had a Devil*: The *Son of man* came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous and a wine bibber, a friend of Publicans and sinners: But wisdom is justified of her Children, Mat. 11. 18, 19. And the weak Christians, Rom. 14. 1, 2, 3. did censure those that durst eat those meats and do those things, which they conceived to be unlawful: They that erre themselves, and make God a Service which he never appointed, will censure all as lukewarm, or temporizers, or wide conscienced men, that erre not with them, and place not their Religion in such superstitious observances, as *Touch not, taste not, handle not, &c.* Col. 2. 18, 21, 22, 23. And the raw censorious Christians are offended with the *Charitable Christian*, because he damneth not as many and as readily as they, and shutteth not enow out of the number of believers, and judgeth not rigorously enough of their wayes. In a word, he is taken by one sort to be too strict, and by the other to be too compliant or indifferent in Religion, because he placeth not the Kingdom of God in meats and dayes, and such like circumstances, but in *righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost*, Rom. 14. 15, 16, 17. And as *Paul withstood Peter to his face*, for drawing men to make scruple or conscience of things lawful, Gal. 2. 11, 12, 13. so is the sound Christian withstood by the superstitious, for *not making scruple* of lawful things.

2. And the weak Christian is in the same case, so long as he followeth prudent, pious, charitable guides: But if he be taken in the snares of superstition, he pleaseth the superstitious party, though he displease the World.

3. And whereas the solid Christian will not stir an inch from truth and duty, to escape either the
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barred of the *wicked*, or the bitterest censures of the *Secretary* or the *weak*; the *Hypocrite* must needs have *one party* on his side: For if both condemn him, and neither applaud him, he loseth his peculiar reward, *Matth. 6. 2, 5. & 23. 5, 6, 7, 8.*

L VII. 1. The *confirmed Christian* doth understand the necessity of a faithful Ministry, for the safety of the *weak*, (as well as the conversion of the *wicked*) and for the preservation of the interest of Religion upon earth! And therefore no personal unworthiness of Ministers, nor any calumnies of enemies; can make him think or speak dishonourably of that sacred office: But he reverenceth it as instituted by Christ; and though he loaths the *foolishness* and *wickedness* of those that run before they are sent, and are utterly insufficient or ungodly, and take it up for a Living or Trade only, as they would a common work, and are *Sons of Belial* that know not the Lord, and cause the offering of the Lord to be abhorred, 1 Sam. 2. 2, 17. Yet no such temptation shall overthrow his reverence to the office, which is the Ordinance of Christ: much less will he be unthankful to those that are able and faithful in their office, and labour instantly for the good of souls, as willing to spend and be spent for their Salvation. When the World abuseth and derideth and injureth them, he is one that honoureth them, both for their work and masters sake, and the experience which he hath had of the blessing of God on their labours to himself. For he knoweth that the smiting of the Shepherds is but the devils ancient way for the scattering of the flock. Though he knoweth that if the salt have lost its savour, it is good for nothing, neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dung-hill,

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but men cast it out, and it's trodden under foot : (be that hath ears to hear, let him hear) Luk. 14. 34, 35. Mat. 5. 13, 14. Yet he also knoweth, that he that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet shall receive a Prophets reward, Matth. 10. 41, 42. And that he that receiveth them, receiveth Christ, and he that despiseth them, that are sent by him, despiseth him, Luk. 10. 16. He therefore readily obeyeth those commands, Heb. 13. 17. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit your selves ; for they watch for your souls as those that must give account : 1 Thel. 5. 12, 13. We beseech you brethren to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you : and to esteem them very highly in Love for their work sake, and be at peace among your selves. 1 Tim. 5. 17. Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour : especially they who labour in the Word and Doctrine.

2. But though the weak Christian be of the same mind so far as he is sanctified, yet is he much more easily tempted into a wrangling censoriousness against his Teachers, though they be never so able and holy men : and by seducers may be drawn to oppose them or speak contemptuously of them, as the Galathians did of Paul, and some of the Corinthians ; accounting him as their Enemy for telling them the truth, when lately they would have pluckt out their eyes to do him good, Gal. 4. 15, 16.

3. But the Hypocrite is most easily engaged against them ; either when they grate upon the guilt of his bosome sin, or open his hypocrisie, or plainly cross him in his carnal interest, or else when his Pride hath conquered his Sobriety, and engaged

engaged him in some Sect or erroneous way, which his Teachers are against, and would reduce him from, *Job. 6. 66. Mark 5. 27. 2 Chron: 25. 16.*

L VIII. 1. A Christian indeed is one that hath stored up such manifold experience of the fulfilling of Gods promises, and the bearing of prayers, and of the goodness of his holy waies, as will greatly fortifie him against all temptations to Infidelity, Apostasie or Distrust. No one hath stronger temptations usually than he; and no one is so well furnished with weapons to resist them. The arguments of most others are fetcht out of their Books only; but he hath more-over a life of experiences to confirm his faith; and so hath the witness in himself. He hath tryed and found that in God, in holiness, in faith, in prayer, which will never suffer him to forsake them. Yea it is like that he hath upon record some such wonders in the answer of prayers, as might do much to silence an Infidel himself. I am sure many Christians have had such strange appearances of the extraordinary hand of God, that hath done much to destroy the remnants of their own unbelief, *Psal. 66. 16.*

2. But the Experiences of the younger, weaker Christians, are much shorter, and less serviceable to their faith: And they have not judgement enough to understand and make use of the dealings of God; but are ready to plead his providences unto evil ends and consequences; and to take their own passionate imaginations for the workings of the Spirit: It is ordinary with them to say, [This or that was set upon my heart, or spoken to me] as if it had been some divine inspiration, when it was nothing but the troubled workings of a weak distempered brain: and it is their own fantasie

and heart that saith that to them, which they think the Spirit of God within them said, *Heb. 5. 11, 12, 13. 2 Thes. 2. 21. John 4. 1. 1 Tim. 4. 1. 1 Cor. 12. 10. Jer. 23. 28. 27. 32. & 29. 8.*

3. And the Hypocrite wanteth those establishing Experiments, of the power of the Gospel, and the bearing of prayers, and fulfilling of promises, and communion with Christ in the Spirit: And therefore he is the more open to the power of temptations, and a subtil disputer will easilier corrupt him, and carry him away to flat Apostasie: For he wanteth the Root and Witness in himself, *Mat. 13. 21, 22 1 John 5. 10. Heb. 6. 6, 7, 8. Luk. 8. 13.*

§ IX. 1. A Christian indeed is one that highly valueth sanctified affections and passions, that all he doth may be done as lively as possibly he can: And also holy abilities for expression. But he much more valueth the three great essential constant parts of the new creature within him; that is, 1. A high estimation of God, and Christ, and Heaven, and Holiness in his understanding; above all that can be set in any competition. 2. A resolved choice and adhesion of the Will, by which he preferreth God, and Christ, and Heaven, and Holiness above all that can be set against them, and is fixedly resolved here to place his happiness and his hopes. 3. The main drift and endeavours of his Life, in which he seeketh first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, *Mat. 6. 33. 9. 20, 21.* In these three (his Highest estimation, his Resolved choice and complacencies, and his Chief endeavours) he taketh his standing constant evidences of his sincerity to consist: And by these he tryeth himself as to his state; and not by the passionate feelings or affections of his heart; nor by his memory or gifts or orderly thinking or expression.

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And it is these Rational operations of his Soul in which he knoweth that Holiness doth principally consist; and therefore he most laboureth to be strong in these. 1. To ground his *Judgement* well; 2. And to resolve to fix his *Will*; 3. And to order his *Conversation* aright, *Psal.* 50. 23. Yet highly valuing sensible *Affections* and gifts of *utterance*, but in subserviency to those which are the vital acts, *1 Cor.* 13. *Rom.* 7. 18, 19, &c. & 6. 16, 22. *Rom.* 8. 13. *Jam.* 2. *Col.* 1. 9. & 3. 16.

2. But the *weak Christian* usually placeth most of his religion in the more *affectionate* and *expressive* part. He striveth more with his heart for *passionate* apprehensions, than for *complacency* and *fixed resolution*: He is often in doubt of his sincerity, when he wanteth the *feeling affectionate* workings which he desireth, &c. thinketh he hath no more grace, than that he hath *sensibility* of *expressive* gifts. And so as he buildeth his comfort upon these *unconstant signs*, his comforts are accordingly *unconstant*: sometime he thinketh he hath grace, when his *body* or other advantages do help the excitation of his lively affections. And when the dulness of his *body* or other impediments hinder this, he questioneth his grace again, because he understandeth not aright the nature and chiefest acts of grace.

3. The *Hypocrite* hath neither the *Rational*, nor the *Passionate* part in *Sincerity*: But he may go much further in the *latter* than in the *former*: A quick and passionate nature, though unsanctified, may be brought to shed more tears, and express more fervour, than many a holy person can. Especially upon the excitation of some quickning Sermon, or some sharp affliction, or great conviction, or at the approach of death. Few of the most holy

persons can constantly retain so lively, fervent, passionate repentings, and desires and resolutions to amend, as some carnal persons have in sickness. The power of *fear alone* doth make them more earnest, that *Love* maketh many a gracious soul. But when the *fear* is over, they are the same again. How oft have I heard a sick man most vehemently profess his resolutions for a holy life, which all have come to nothing afterwards? How oft have I heard a common drunkard with tears cry out against himself for his sin, and yet go on in it? And how many gracious persons have I known, whose judgements and wills have been groundedly resolved for God and holiness, and their lives have been holy, fruitfull and obedient, who yet could not shed a tear for sin, nor feel any very great sorrows or joys? If you judge of a man by his earnestness in some good moods, and not by the constant tenor of his life, you will think many an Hypocrite to be better than most Saints. Who would have thought that had seen him only in that fit, but that *Saul* had been a penitent man, when he lift up his voice and wept, and said to *David*, *Thou art more righteous than I; for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil*, 1 Sam. 24. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. A smaller matter will raise some sudden passions, than will renew the soul, and give the preheminance to God, and Holiness, and Heaven, in the Judgement. *Will and Conversation*, Hos. 6. 4. & 13. 3. Isa. 58. 2. Mat. 13. 20.

LX. 1. A Christian indeed confirmed in Grace, is one that maketh it the business of his life to prepare for death; and delayeth not his serious thoughts of it, and preparations for it till it surprize him; and therefore when it cometh it findeth him prepared, and

and he gladly entertaineth it as the messenger of his Father, to call him to his everlasting home. It is not a strange unexpected thing to him, to hear he must die : He died daily in his daily sufferings, and mortified contempt of worldly things, and in his daily expectation of his change. He wondereth to see men at a dying time, surprized with astonishment and terrour, who jovially or carelessly neglected it before ; as if they had never known till then that they must die ? Or as if a few years time were reason enough for so great a difference : For that which he certainly knoweth will be, he looketh at as if it were even at hand ; and his preparation for it is more serious in his health than other mens is on their death-bed. He useth more carefully to bethink himself, what graces he shall need at a dying time, and in what case he shall then with his soul to be ; and accordingly he laboureth in his provisions now ; even as if it were to be to morrow. He verily believeth that it is incomparably better for him to be with Christ, than to abide on earth, and therefore (though Death of it self be an enemy, and terrible to nature) yet being the only passage into happiness, he gladly entertaineth it. Though he have not himself any clear and satisfactory apprehensions of the place and state of the happiness of departed souls, yet it quieteth him to know that they *shall be with Christ*, and that Christ knoweth all, and prepareth and secureth for him that promised Rest, *Job. 12. 26. 2 Cor. 5. 1, 7, 8. Phil. 1. 21, 23. Luke 23. 43.* Though he is not free from all the natural tears of death, yet his belief and hope of endless happiness doth abate those fears by the joyfull expectation of the gain which followeth, (See my Book called *The last enemy*, and

the last work of a Believer, and that of self-denial, against the fears of death.)

But especially he loveth and longeth for the coming of Christ to judgement: as knowing that then the Marriage-day of the Lamb is come, and then the desires and hopes of all Believers shall be satisfied: *Then shall the Righteous shine as Stars in the Kingdom of their Father*; and the hand of violence shall not reach them. Every enemy then is overcome, and all the Redeemers work is consummated, and the Kingdom delivered up unto the Father. Then shall the ungodly and the unmercifull be confounded, and the righteous filled with everlasting joy, when their Lord shall throughly plead their cause, and justify them against the accusations of Satan, and all the lies of his malicious instruments. O blessed, glorious, joyfull day, when Christ shall come with thousands of his Angels, to execute vengeance on the ungodly world, and to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that now believe, 2 Thef. 1. 8, 9, 10 When the patient followers of the Lamb shall behold him in glory whom they have believed in, and shall see that they did not pray, or hope, or wait in vain! When Christ himself and his sacred truth, shall be justified and glorified in the presence of the world, and his enemies mouths forever stopped: *When he shall convince all that are ungodly of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeces which ungodly sinners have spoken against him*, Jude 14, 15. Where then is the mouth that pleadeth the cause of infidelity and impiety? and reproached the serious holiness of Believers? and made a jest of the Judgements of the Lord? Then what terrours, and confusion,
and

and shame, what fruitless repentings will seize upon that man; that set himself against the holy ones of the Lord, and knew not the day of his visitation, and imbraced the image and form of godliness, while he abhorred the power. The Joys which will then possess the hearts of the Justified, will be such as now no heart can comprehend. When Love shall come to be glorified in the highest expression, to those that lately were so low; when all their doubts, and fears, and sorrows, shall be turned into full contenting sight, and all tears shall be wiped away, and all reproaches turned into glory, and every enemy overcome, and sin destroyed, and holiness perfected, and our vile bodies changed, and made like the glorious body of Christ, *Phil. 3. 20, 21. Col. 3. 3, 4.* Then will the Love and work of our Redemption be fully understood: And then a Saint will be a Saint indeed; when with Christ they shall judge the Angels and the world, *1 Cor. 6. 2, 3.* and shall hear from Christ, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, Mat. 25. 34.* Enter ye into the joy of your Lord, *Mat. 25. 21.* Then every knee shall bow to Christ, and every tongue shall confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father, *Phil. 2. 9, 10, 11.* Then sin will fully appear in its malignity; and holiness in its luster unto all: The proud will then be abased, and the mouths of all the wicked stopped; when they shall see to their confusion the Glory of that Christ whom they despised, and of those holy ones whom they made their scorn: In vain will they then knock ~~when the~~ door is shut, and cry, *Lord, Lord, open unto us, Mat. 25. 10, 11, 12.* And in vain will they then wish, *O that we had known the day of our visitation, that we might have died the death of the righteous,*

and our latter end might have been as his, Numb. 23. 10. Rom. 3. 19. Job 5. 16. Psal. 107. 43. & 31. 23. & 13. 6, 8.

The day of Death is to true Believers a day of Happiness and Joy : But it is much easier for them to think with joy on the coming of Christ, and the day of Judgement, because it is a day of fuller joy, and soul and body shall be conjoynd in the blessedness; and there is nothing in it to be so great a stop to our desires, as *Death* is, which naturally is an enemy. God hath put a love of life, and fear of death into the nature of every sensible creature, as necessary for the preservation of themselves and others, and the orderly Government of the world : But what is there in the blessed day of Judgement, which a Justified child of God should be averse to? O if he were but sure that *this* would be the day, or week, or year of the coming of his Lord, how glad would the *confirmed Christian* be? and with what longings would he be looking up, to see that most desired sight.

2. And the *weak Christian* is so far of the same mind, that he had rather come to God by *Death* and *Judgement*, than not at all: (except when temptations make him fear that he shall be condemned.) He hath fixedly made choice of that *Felicity*, which till then he cannot attain. He would not take all the pleasures of this world, for his hopes of the happiness of that day: But yet he thinketh not of it with so strong a faith, and great consolation, nor with such boldness and desire, as the *confirmed Christian* doth: but either with much more dull security, or more perplexity and fear. His thoughts of God and of the world to come, are much more dark and doubtfull; and his fears of

of that day are usually so great as make his desires and joys scarce felt: Only he thinketh not of it with that contempt or stupidity as the Infidel or hardened sinner; nor with the terrours of those that have no God, no Christ, no hope: (except when temptation bringeth him near to the borders of despair.) His death indeed is unspeakably safer than the death of the ungodly; and the joys which he is entering into will quickly end the terrour; but yet he hath no great comfort of the present; but only so much trust in Christ, as keepeth his heart from sinking into despair.

3. But to the *Hypocrise* or *seeming Christian*, *Death* and *Judgement* are the most unwelcome daies, and the *thoughts* of them the most unwelcome thoughts: He would take any tolerable life on earth, at any time, for all his hopes of Heaven; and that not only through the doubts of his own sincerity (which may sometime be the case of a tempted Christian) but through the unsoundness of his belief of the life to come, or the utter unsuitableness of his soul to such a blessedness; which maketh him look at it as less desirable to him, than a life of fleshly pleasures here. All that he doth for Heaven is upon meer necessity, because he knoweth that *Die he must*, and he had rather be in Heaven than in Hell, though he had rather be in prosperity on earth than either: And as he taketh Heaven but as a reserve or second good, so he seeketh it with reserves, and in the second place: And having no better preparations for *Death* and *Judgement*, no marvel if they be his greatest terrour. He may possibly by his self-deceit have some abatement of his fears, and he may by *Pride* and *Wit* seem very valiant and comfortable at his death, to hide his fear and pusillanimity from the world. But the

the ~~cause~~ of all his misery is, that he sought not first the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness, and laid not up a treasure in Heaven, but upon earth, and loved this world above God, & above the world to come, and so his heart is not set on Heaven, nor his affections on the things above; and therefore he hath not that Love to God, to Christ, to Saints, to perfect Holiness, which should make that world most desirable in his eyes, and make him think unfeignedly that it is best for him to depart and live with Christ for ever. Having not the Divine Nature, nor having lived the Divine Life in walking with God, his complacency and desires are carnal according to the nature which he hath. And this is the true cause, (and not only his doubts of his own sincerity) of his unwillingness to die, or to see the day of Christ's appearance, *Matth. 6. 33. 19. 20, 21. 1 Job. 2. 15. Col. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. Rom. 8. 5, 6, 7, 8. 1 Cor. 2. 13, 14. 2 Pet. 1. 4.*

And thus I have shewed you from the Word of God, and the Nature of Christianity, the true Characters of the confirmed Christian, and of the weak Christian, and of the seeming Christian.

The Uses for which I have drawn up these Characters, and which the Reader is to make of them, are these.

I. Here the weak Christian and the Hypocrite may see what manner of persons they ought to be. Not only how unsafe it is to remain in a state of Hypocrisie, but also how uncomfortable, and unserviceable, and troublesome it is, to remain in a state of weakness and diseasedness; what a folly (and indeed a sign of Hypocrisie) is it to think, If I had but grace

grace enough to save me, I would desire no more, or I would be well content. Are you content if you have but *Life* here, to difference you from the dead? If you were continually Infants, that must be fed, and carried, and made clean by others, or if you had a continual Gout, or Stone, or Leprosie, and lived in continual want and misery, you would think that *Life* alone is not enough: and that *non vivere tantum sed valere vita est*: that *Life* is uncomfortable, when we have nothing but *Life*, and all the delights of life are gone. He that lyeth in continual pain and want, is weary of his life, if he cannot separate it from those calamities. He that knoweth how necessary *strength* is, as well as *life*, to do any considerable service for God, and how many *pains* attend the diseases and infirmities of the weak, and what great dishonour cometh to Christ and Religion, by the faults and childishness of many that shall be pardoned and saved, would certainly bestir him with all possible care to get out of this sick or infant state.

II. By this you may see who are the *strong* Christians, and who are the *weak*: It is not alwaies the man of *Learning* and *free expressions*, that can speak longest and wiseliest of holy things, that is the *strong confirmed* Christian: But he that most excelleth in the *Love* of God and man, and in a heavenly mind and holy life. Nor is it he that is unlearned, or of a weak memory, or slow expression, that is the weakest Christian: But he that hath least Love to God and man, and the most Love to his carnal self, and to the world, and the strongest corruptions, and the weakest grace. Many a poor day-labourer or woman, that can scarce speak sense, is a *stronger Christian* (as being stronger in *Faith*,
and

and Love, and Patience, and Humility, and Mortification, and Self-denial) than many great Preachers and Doctors of the Church.

III. You see here what kind of men they be that we call the Godly; and what that Godliness is which we plead for, against the malicious Serpentine Generation. The lyars would make men believe, that by Godliness we mean a few affected strains, or hypocritical shews, or heartless lip-service, or singular opinions, or needless scrupulosity, or ignorant zeal; yea a schism, or faction, or sedition, or rebellion, or what the Devil please to say. If these sixty Characters describe any such thing, then I will not deny, that in the way that such men call heresie, faction, schism, singularity, so worship we the God of our Fathers: But if not, the Lord rebuke thee Satan, and hasten the day when the *lying lips shall be put to silence*, Psal. 131. 18. & 120. 2. & 109. 2. Prov. 12. 19, 22. & 10. 18.

IV. By this also you may see how unexcusable the enemies of Christianity and Godliness are, and for what it is that they hate and injure it. Is there any thing in all this Character of a Christian, that deserveth the suspicion or hatred of the world? what harm is there in it? or what will it do against them? I may say to them of his servants as Christ did of himself, *Joh. 10. 32. Many good works have I shewed you from my Father: for which of these works do ye stone me?* Many heavenly graces are in the sanctified Believer: For which of these do you hate and injure him? I know that Goodness is so far in credit with humane nature, that you will answer as the Jews did, *v. 33. For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy: We hate them not for Godliness, but for Hypocrisie and Sin.* But if
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it be so indeed, 1. Speak not against Godliness it self, nor against the strictest performance of our duty. 2. Yea plead for Godliness, and countenance and promote it, while you speak against Hypocrisie and Sin. 3. And chuse out the Hypocrite whose Character is here truly set before you; and let him be the object of your enmity and distaste: Let it fall on those that are *worldlings* and *time-servers*, and will stretch their consciences to their carnal interest, and can do any thing to save their skin; and being false to Christ, can hardly be true to any of their superiours, but only in subordination to themselves. As it is said of *Constantine*, that he commanded that all his servants should be turned out of their places that would not renounce Christianity: And when he had thereby tryed them, he turned out all the Apostates, (and kept in the sincere) and told them; They could not be true to him, that were not true to their God and Saviour. 4. And see that you be not *Hypocrites* your selves. You profess your selves Christians: and what is it to be a Christian indeed, you may here perceive. If any that fall under the character of Hypocrites (or worse) shall vilifie or hate the *sincere Christians* as Hypocrites, what a horrid aggravation of their Hypocrisie will it be?

Indeed it is the *best* and *strongest* Christians that have most of the hatred both of the *Unbelieving* and the *Hypocritical* world. And for my own part I must confess, that the very observation of the *universal implacable* enmity, which is undeniably seen throughout the world, between the *womans* and the *serpents* seed (being such as is not found among any other sorts of men on other occasions) doth not a little confirm my belief of the holy Scriptures,

Scriptures, and seemeth to be an argument not well to be answered by any enemy of the Christian cause. That it should begin between the two first Brothers that ever were born into the world, and stop in nothing lower than shedding the righteous blood of *Abel* for no other cause, but because the works of *Cain* were evil, and his Brothers righteous, 1 *Job*. 3. 12, 13. And that it should go down to the Prophets, and Christ, and the Apostles, and Primitive Saints, and continue to this day throughout the earth: and that the profession of the same Religion doth not alter it, but rather enrage the enmity of Hypocrites against all that are serious and sincere in the Religion which they themselves profess: These are things that no good account can be given of, save only from the predictions and verities of the word of God.

V. Also you may hence perceive, how exceedingly injurious *Hypocrites* and *scandalous* Christians are, to the Name of Christ, and Cause of Christianity and Godliness in the world. The blind malicious enemies of *Faith* and *Godliness*, instead of judging of them by the *sacred Rule*, do look only to the *Professors*, and think of *Religion* as they think of *them*. If they see the *Professors* of Christianity to be covetous, proud, usurpers, time-servers, self-exalters, cruel, schismatical, rebellious; they presently charge all this upon their *Religion*; and *Godliness* must bear the blame; when all comes but for want of *Godliness* and *Religion*. And all the world hath not done so much against these and all other sins, as Christ hath done. What if Christs *Disciples* strive *who shall be the greatest*? Is it long of him, who girdeth himself to wash and wipe their feet? and telleth them, that except they be converted,

converted, and become as little children, they shall not enter into the Kingdom of God, Mat. 18. 3. and telleth them, that though the Kings of the Gentiles do exercise Lordship over them, and they that exercise authority upon them are called Benefactors, yet ye shall not be so, Luk. 22. 25, 26. Is it long of him that hath said to the Elders, Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind: neither as being Lords over Gods heritage, but being examples to the flock? Who hath let the Elders such a lesson as you find in Acts 20. & 2 Tim. 4. 1, 2, 3. & 1 Tim. 5. 17. If any called Christians shall be truly schismatical, factious or turbulent, is it long of him that hath prayed the Father that they may all be One, Job. 17. 21, 22, 23. and hath so vehemently intreated them that they speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among them, and that they be perfectly joyned together in the same mind, and in the same judgement, 1 Cor. 7. 10. and hath charged them to mark them that cause divisions and offences contrary to the Doctrine which they had learned, and to avoid them? Rom. 16. 16, 17. If any called Christians shall be seditious, or rebellious, or as the Papists believe, that the Clergy are from under the Jurisdiction of Kings, and that the Pope hath power to excommunicate Princes, and absolve their subjects from their allegiance, and give their dominions to others, (as it is decreed in the General Council at the Lateran under Innocent the third, Can. 3.) Is all this long of Christ, who hath paid tribute to Caesar, and hath commanded that every soul be subject to the higher Powers, and not resist, and this for conscience sake, Rom. 13. 1, 2, 3. and hath bid his Disciples

Disciples rather to turn the other cheek, than to seek revenge, *Luk. 6. 29.* and hath told them that they that use the sword (of rebellion, or revenge, or cruelty) shall perish by the sword, *Job. 18. 11.* If any Christians will under pretence of Religion, set up a cruel Inquisition, or kill men to convert them, or become self-lovers, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to Parents, unthankfull, unboly, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false-accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, &c. Is this long of him that hath forbid all this? *2 Tim. 3. 2, 3, 4, 5.* If for their own domination, lust or covetousness, men called Christians, will be worse than Heathens and Wolves to one another, is this long of him that hath made it his sheep-mark by which we must be known to all men to be his Disciples, that we love one another? *Joh. 13. 35.* and hath told them, that if they bite and devour one another, they shall be devoured one of another? *Gal. 5. 15.* and hath blessed the merciful, as those that shall find mercy, *Mat. 5. 7.* and hath told men that what they do to his little ones, shall be taken as if it were done to himself, *Mat. 25.* and hath commanded the strong to bear with the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves, *Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3.* and to receive one another as Christ received us, *Rom. 15. 7.* and hath told those that offend but one of his little ones, that it were good for that man that a milstone were hanged about his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the Sea, *Matth. 18. 6.* and hath told him that smiteth his fellow servants, that his Lord will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the Hypocrites, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, *Mat. 24. 48, 49, 50, 51.*

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I wonder what men would have Christ do, to free himself and the Christian Religion from the imputation of the sins of the Hypocrites, and the weak distempered Christians. Would they have him yet make *stricter* Laws (when they hate these for being so strict already ?) Or would they have him condemn sinners to more grievous punishment, when they are already offended at the severity of his threatnings ? O what an unrighteous generation are his enemies, that blame the *Law* because men break it ? and blame *Religion* because many are not *Religious* enough ? As if the Sun must be hated, because that shadows and dungeons do want light ; or *Life* and *Health* must be hated, because many are sick and pained by their diseases ! But Christ will shortly stop all the mouths of these unreasonable men ; and O how easily will he justify himself, his Laws, and all his holy waies ; when all *iniquity* shall be for ever silent ! And though it must needs be that offences come, yet *wo* to the world because of offences, and *wo* to the man by whom they come, Mat. 18. 7. Luke 17. 1.

The wrong that Christ receiveth from hypocrites and scandalous Christians (of all ranks and places) is not to be estimated. These are the causes that Christianity and Godliness are so contemptible in the eyes of the world ! that Jews, and Heathens, and Mahometans, are still unconverted and deriders of the Faith : Because they see such scandalous tyranny and worship among the Papists, and such scandalous lives among the greatest part of professed Christians in the world : whereas if the Papal Tyranny were turned into the *Christian Ministry*, (Luke 22. 25, 26, 27. and 1 Tim. 5. 17.) and their irrational sopperies, and historical hypocritical

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worship

worship were changed into a reverent, rational and spiritual worship; and the cruel, carnal, worldly lives of men called Christians, were changed into *Self-denial, Love and Holiness*. In a word, if Christians were *Christians indeed*, and such as I have here described from their Rule; what a powerfull means would it be of the conversion of all the unbelieving world? Christianity would then be in the eye of the world, as the Sun in its brightness, and the glory of it would dazle the eyes of beholders, and draw in millions to enquire after Christ; who are now driven from him by the sins of *Hypocrites and scandalous Believers*.

And this doth not contradict what I said before, of the *Enmity of the world to Holiness*, and that *the best are most abused by the ungodly*: For even this enmity must be *rationaly* cured, as by the error of *reason* it is fed. God useth by the power of intellectual light, to bring all those out of darkness whom he saveth, and so bringeth them from the power of Satan to himself, *Acts 26. 18*. Men hate not *Holiness as Good*, but as misconceived to be evil. *Evil* I say to them, because it is opposite to the sensual pleasures, which they take to be their chiefest good. And the way of curing their enmity, is by shewing them their error; and that is by shewing them the excellency and necessity of that which they unreasonably distaste, *Acts 26. 9, 10, 11, 14, 19. Luke 15. 13, 14, 15, 16. Acts 2. 36, 37*.

VI. Lastly, In these Characters you have some help in the work of *Self-examination*, for the tryal both of the Truth and Strength of grace. I suppose it will be objected, that in other
Treatises

Treatises I have reduced all the infallible Marks of Grace to a smaller number. To which I answer, I still say, that the predominancy or prevalency of the Interest of God as our God, and Christ as our Saviour, and the Spirit as our Sanctifier, in the estimation of the Understanding, the Resolved Choice of the Will, and the Government of the Life, against all the worldly interest of the Flesh, is the only infallible sign of a justified regenerate soul. But this whole hath many parts, and it is abundance of particulars materially in which this sincerity is to be found : Even all the sixty Characters which I have here named, are animated by that one, and contained in it. And I think to the most the full description of a Christian in his *essential* and *integral* parts, (yet shewing which are indeed *essential*) is the best way to acquaint them with the nature of Christianity, and to help them in the tryal of themselves. And as it were an abuse of Humane Nature, for a Painter to draw the picture of a man, without arms, or legs, or nose, or eyes, because he may be *a man* without them : so would it have been in me to draw only a maimed picture of a Christian, because a maimed Christian is a *Christian*. Yet because there are so many maimed Christians in the world, I have also shewed you their lamentable defects; not in a manner which tendeth to encourage them in their sins and wants under pretence of comforting them, but in that manner which may best excite them to their duty in order to their recovery, without destroying their necessary supporting comforts.

O happy Church, and State, and Family, which are composed of such *confirmed Christians* ! where the predominate temperature is such as I have here described ! Yea happy is the place where Magistrates and Ministers are such ; who are the vital parts of State and Church, and the instruments appointed to communicate these perfections to the rest. But how much more happy is the New *Jerusalem*, the City of the Living God, where the perfected spirits of the just in Perfect Life, and Light and Love, are perfectly *beholding*, and *admiring*, and *praising*, and *pleasing* the Eternal God, their Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier for ever ! where the least and meanest is greater and more perfect than the *confirmed Christian* here described ! And where Hypocrisy is utterly excluded, and Imperfection ceaseth, with scandal, censures, uncharitableness, division, and all its other sad effects : And where the souls that *thirsted* after *Righteousness* shall be fully *satisfied* ; and Love God more than they can now desire ! and never grieve themselves or others with their wants or weaknesses, or misdoings any more. And, O blessed day, when our most Blessed Head shall be revealed from Haven with his mighty Angels, and shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that now believe ; whose weakness here occasioned his dishonour, and their own contempt ! when the seed of Grace is grown up into Glory, and all the world whether they will or not, shall discern

cern between the Righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not; between the clean and the unclean, and between him that sweareth, and him that feareth an oath : And though now our Life is hid with Christ in God, and it yet appeareth not (to the sight of our selves or others) *what we shall be; yet then when Christ who is our Life shall appear, we also shall appear with him in Glory,* Heb. 12. 22, 23. Rev. 22. 3, 4, 5, 14, 15. & 21. 3, 4, 8. 2 Thes. 1. 9, 10. Mat. 5. 4, 6. Mal. 3. 18. Eccles. 9. 2. 1 Joh. 3. 2, 3. Col. 3. 3, 4. Away then my soul from this dark, deceitfull and vexatious world ! Love not thy diseases, thy fetters and calamities : Groan daily to thy Lord, and earnestly groan to be cloathed upon with thy house which is from Heaven, (2 Cor. 5. 2, 4.) that mortality may be swallowed up of Life ! Joyn in the harmonious desires of the Creatures, who groan to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God, Rom. 8. 20, 21, 22. *Abide in him, and walk in Righteousness, that when he shall appear, thou maist have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming,* 1 John 2. 28, 29. Joyn not with the evil servants, who say in their hearts, Our Lord delayeth his coming, and begin to smite their fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; whose Lord shall come in a day when they look not for him, and in an hour that they are not aware of, and shall cut them asunder, and appoint them their portion with the Hypocrites, where shall be weeping & gnathing of teeth, Mat. 24. 48, 49, 50, 51.

O watch and pray that thou enter not into temptation! And be patient, for the Judge is at the door! Lift up thy head with earnest expectation, O my soul, for thy Redemption draweth near! Rejoyce in hope before thy Lord, for he cometh; he cometh to judge the world in Righteousness and Truth. Behold he cometh quickly, though faith be failing, and iniquity abound, and Love waxeth cold, and scoffers say, where is the promise of his coming! Make haste O thou whom my soul desireth! and come in Glory as thou first camest in Humility! and conform them to thy self in Glory, whom thou madest conformable to thy sufferings and humility! Let the Holy City New *Jerusalem* be prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and let Gods Tabernacle be with men! that he may dwell with them and be their God, and wipe away their tears, and death, and sorrow, and crying; and pain may be no more, but former things may pass away! Keep up our Faith, our Hope, our Love! And daily vouchsafe us some beams of thy directing consolatory Light in this our darkness: And be not as a stranger to thy scattered flock, in this desolate wildernesse! But let them hear thy voice, and find thy presence, and have *such conversation* with thee in *Heaven*, in the exercise of Faith, and Hope, and Love, which is agreeable to their low and distant state: Testifie to their souls that thou art their Saviour and Head, and that they abide in thee, by the Spirit which thou hast given them, abiding, and overcoming in them, and as thy Agent preparing them for eternal life. O let not our darkness, nor thy strangeness seed our odious

odious Unbelief ! O shew thy self more clearly to thy Redeemed ones ! And come and dwell in our hearts by Faith ! And by holy Love, let us dwell in God, and God in us ! that we *gripe* not after him, as those that worship *an unknown God*. O save us from Temptation ! And if the messenger of Satan be sent to buffet us, let thy strength be manifest in our weakness, and thy grace appear sufficient for us. And give us the patience which thou tellest us we need, that having done thy will, we may inherit the promise : And bring us to the *fight* and fruition of our Creator, *of whom*, and *through whom*, and *to whom* are all things ; to *whom* be Glory for ever. Amen.

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Religion, the welfare of the Church and those about you, and the *living* and *dying* comforts of your selves; O do not sluggishly rest in an infant state of Grace! Did you but know how a *weak* and *strong* Faith differ, and how a *weak* and a *sound Confirmed Christian* differ, as to the honour of God, and the good of others, and especially to themselves, both in *life* and *death*, it would quickly awaken you to a cheerful diligence, for so high and excellent an end. Did you but well understand the wrong that Christ and the Gospel have sustained in the World, yea in *England* by *weak, diseased, distempered* Christians, your hearts would bleed, and with shame and grief, would be your secret and open lamentation. See up then the Grace that is given you, and Christ's means, and do your best, and you will find that Christ is not an insufficient Physician, nor an ineffectual Saviour, or an empty Fountain; but that he is filled with all the fulness of God, and hath Spirit and life to communicate to his Members, *Zech. 12. 8.* and that there is no want which he cannot supply, and no corruption or temptation, which his Grace is not sufficient to overcome, *John 4. 14. 2 Cor. 12. 9. Rom. 4. 6. Col. 3. 1, 3, 4.*

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F I N I S.

THE
CHARACTER
Of a Sound Confirmed
CHRISTIAN.

As also,

1. Of a Weak Christian: And
3. Of a Seeming Christian.

Written to imprint upon mens
minds the true *Idea* or (conception)

OF

Godliness and Christianity.

By Richard Baxter.

The Second Part of the Directions
for Weak Christians.

L O N D O N,

Printed by R. White, for Nevil Simmons, at
the Three Crowns near Holborn
Conduit. 1669.

CHARACTER

CHRISTIAN





THE
PREFACE
TO THE
SECOND PART;

Directed to my worthy Friend,
Henry Ashurst, Esquire, Citizen of
London.

Dear and faithful Friend.



When this Book was
Printed and passing
into the World, with-
out the ordinary or-
nament of a prefixed
honoured Name, my
thoughts reduced me into the com-
mon way, though not upon the com-
mon

The Preface.

mon reasons; assuring me that your name, would be more than an accident or ceremony to such a discourse as this; even a part more substantial than a Map is in a Treatise of Geography, or the well-cut Figure in Tractates of Anatomy. Discourses of Navigation, Architecture, Musick, &c. may almost as hopefully instruct the Learners, without any visible operations or effects, as the Characters of well-tempered Christians, can duly inform the minds of ignorant ungodly men, of so Divine a thing as Christianity and Godliness, without acquaintance with some such Persons, in whom these Characters are manifestly exemplified. Wise and holy precepts are to make wise and holy persons: It is such Persons as well as such Precepts which bear the image of God which indeed is most perfect in exactness and integrity in the precepts; (for in them

The Preface.

them is no imperfection or error, as they are of God ;) But it is of greater *Excellency*, in *activity* and *usefulness* as it is in *men*. And therefore as God delighteth in his *servants*, and is Glorified in and by *them* in the world ; so Satan usually chooseth such *Persons*, to reproach and make odious to the ignorant, rather than the *holy Precepts* immediately, by which they are directed ; both because their *Holiness* is most exasperating by *activity* ; and also most lyable to calumny and contempt, through imperfection, and mixture of that which indeed is worthy of dislike. Till *Godliness* and *Christianity* be visible in full *perfection*, and elevated above the contradiction of folly, and the contempt of pride, the blind distracted minds of hardened forsaken sinners, will not acknowledge its divine celestial nature, and worth : But then it will be too late to become partakers

The Preface.

of it: They must both *know* and *possess* it in its *infancy* and *minority*, who will ever enjoy it in its heavenly dignity and glory. If seasonable illumination and conversion, confute not the deceits and slanders which pride and ignorance have entertained, the too-late confutation of them by death and their following experience, will make them wish, that they had been wise at cheaper rates; when it will be in vain to cry, *Give us of your Oyle, for our Lamps are out*, Mat. 25. 8.

But while I offer your name to the malicious world, as an instance of the temper which I here describe, I intend it not as a *singular* though an *eminent* instance: For through the great mercy of God, there are thousands of examples of *confirmed* Christians; among us in this Land, even before those eyes which will not see them. But it is not Catalogues but single names, which Writers have used in
this

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this way. And why may I not take the advantage of Custome, to leave to the World the testimony of my estimation and great respects, to so deserving a person of the primitive Christian Catholick temper: And to let them know, what sort of men were my most dear and faithful friends? And also thus to express my love, by telling you closely *what you must be*, as well as by telling the World for their example, *what you are*. Upon these accounts, without your knowledge or consent, I presume thus to prefix your name, to this Treatise written long ago, but now published by

Your faithful Friend,

Rich. Baxter.

From my Lodging
in New-Prison,
June 14. 1669.

• ERRATA.



ERRATA.

Reader, When I had gathered the *Errata* I was separated by a Prison from those Collections; and having but two of the Sheets now at hand, I shall give you the *Errata* of them only.

IN the Contents n. 15. for *Lovers of God* read *Love of God*.
Pag. 163. l. 5. for *to fix r.* and *fix.* pag. 163. l. 18. *but*
that. p. 164. l. 5. for *that r. than.* p. 169. l. 30. for
r. far. p. 170. l. 1. for *cave r. cure.* All the rest I have forgotten.
Save that somewhere I remember *filthy* for *fleshy*.

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To



TO THE READER.

Readers,



It is a matter of greater moment than I can express, what *Idea* or *Image* of the nature of **GODLINESS** and **CHRISTIANITY** is *imprinted upon mens minds*:

The description which is expressed in the *sacred Scriptures*, is true and full: The thing described is rational, pure, perfect, unblameable and amiable. That which is expressed in the *Lives* of the most, is nothing so; but is purblind, defiled, maimed, imperfect, culpable, and mixt with so much of the contrary quality, that to them that cannot distinguish the Chaff from the *Wheat*, the *Sickness* from the *Life*, it seemeth an *unreasonable*, *sanctisfull*, *loathsome* and *vexatious* thing; and so far from being worthy to be preferred before all the *Riches*, *Honours* and *Pleasures* of the world, that it seemeth worthy to be kept under as a troubler of

To the Reader.

Kingdoms, Societies and Souls. And doubtless this *wonstrous Expression* of it in mens Lives, is because the *perfect expression* of it in Gods Word, hath not made a *true impression* upon the *Mind*, and consequently upon the *Heart*. For as it is *sound Doctrine* which must make *sound Christians*, so *Doctrine* worketh on the *will* and *affections* not as it is in *it self*, and as *delivered*, but as it is *understood*, *believed*, *remembered*, *considered*; even as it is *imprinted* on the *Mind*, and *used* by it. And as *interposed matter*, or *defective application*, may cause the Image on the Wax to be *imperfect*, though made by the most *perfect Seal*: so is it in this case; when one man doth *defectively understand* the Scripture-description of a godly man, or Christian; and another by *misunderstanding* mixeth *false conceptions* of his own; and another by a corrupt depraved will doth hinder the understanding from *believing*, or *remembering*, or *considering* and *using* what it partly apprehendeth; what wonder if the Godliness and Christianity in their hearts be unlike the Godliness and Christianity in the Scriptures: When the Law of God in Nature and Scripture is pure and uncorrupt, and the Law of God written imperfectly on the heart, is there mixt with the carnal Law in their members, no marvel if

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it be *expressed* accordingly in their lives.

I have therefore much endeavoured in all my writings, and especially in this, to draw out the full *pourtraiture* of a *Christian* or *godly man* indeed, and to describe *Gods Image* on the soul of man, in such a manner as tendeth to the just information of the Readers mind, and the filling up of the wants, and rectifying the errors which may be found in his former conceptions of it. And I do purposely inculcate the same things oft, in several writings (as when I preached I did in all my Sermons) that the Reader may find that I bring him not undigested needless novelties, and that the frequent repetition of them may help to make the deeper and fuller impression: For my work is to subserve the Holy Ghost, in putting *Gods Law* into mens hearts, and writing it out truly, clearly and fully upon their inward parts; that they may be made such themselves, by understanding thoroughly what they *must be*, and what a *solid Christian* is: And that thus they may be born again by the *incorruptible, immortal seed*, the Word of God which will live and abide for ever; and may purifie their souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, 1 Pet. 1. 22, 23, 25. He is the best Lawyer, Physician, Souldier, &c. who hath his Doctrine in his brain, and not only in his Books; and hath

To the Reader.

digested his reading into an intellectual
systeme and habit of knowledge. If Mini-
sters had an hundred times over repeated
the *integral pourtraiture* or *character* of a
sound Christian, till it had been as familiar
to the *minds* and *memories* of their hearers,
as is the description of a Magistrate, a
Physician, a School-master, a Husband-
man, a Shepherd, and such things as they
are well acquainted with, it would have
been a powerfull means to make *sound*
Christians. But when mens minds conceive
of a *Christian*, as a man that differeth from
Heathens and Infidels, in nothing but
holding the *Christian Opinions*, and using
different *words* and *ceremonies* of worship,
and such like, no wonder if such be but
opinionative lifeless Christians: And if
their Religion *make them no better* than a
Seneca or *Plutarch*, I shall never believe
that they are any surer to be saved than
they. And such a sort of men there are,
that suppose Christianity to consist but of
these three parts; 1. The *Christian Do-*
ctrine acknowledged (which they call *Faith*.)
2. The *Orders* and *Ordinances* of the *Chri-*
stian Church and *Worship*, submitted to, and
decently used (which they call *Godliness*.)
And 3. The *heart* and *life* of a *Cato*, *Cicero*,
or *Socrates* adjoynd. But all that goeth
beyond this, (which is the *Life* of *Chri-*
stianity

To the Reader.

Christianity and Godliness, a Lively Faith, and Hope, and Love, a Heavenly and Holy mind and life, from the renewing indwelling Spirit of God, which is described in this Treatise) they are strangers to it, and take it to be but fanſie and hypocrisie. These *No-Christians* do much to reduce the Church to *Infidelity*; that there may be indeed *No Christians* in the world. For my part I must confess, if there were no better Christians in the world than these, I think I should be no Christian my self: And if Christ made men no better than the Religion of *Socrates*, *Cato* or *Seneca*, and did no more to the reparation and perfecting of mens hearts and lives, I should think no better of the *Christian Religion* than of theirs: For the *means* is to be estimated by the *End* and *Use*: And that's the best Physician that hath the Remedies which are fittest to work the cure. If God had not acquainted me with a sort of men that have really more Holiness, Mortification, Spirituality, Love to God, and to one another, and even to enemies, and more heavenly desires, expectations and delights, than these men before described: have, it would have been a very great hinderance to my Faith.

The same may I say of those that place Godliness and Christianity only in hold-

To the Reader.

ing strict opinions, and in affected need-
less singularities, and in the fluent Orato-
ry and length of prayer, and avoiding
other mens forms and modes of worship,
and in any thing short of a *Renewed, Holy,
Heavenly* heart and life.

And undoubtedly if a *true, full* Cha-
racter of *Godlines* had been imprinted in
their minds, we should never have seen
the Professors of it so blotted with sen-
suality, selfishness, pride, ambition, world-
liness, distrust of God, self-conceitedness,
heresie, schism, rebellions, unquietness,
impatience, unmercifulness, and cruelty
to mens souls and bodies, as we have seen
them in this age; and all this justified as
consistent with Religion.

And I fear that because this Treatise
will speak to few that are not some way
guilty, every face which hath a spot or
blemish will be offended with the glass:
and lest the faulty will say that I parti-
cularly intended to disgrace them: But I
must here tell the Reader, to prevent his
misunderstanding, that if he shall imagine
that I have my eyes upon particular par-
ties, and as a discontented person do in-
tend to blame those that differ from my
self, or to grieve inferiours, or dishonour
and asperse superiours, they will mistake
me, and wrong themselves, and me, who
professedly

To the Reader.

professedly intend but the true Description of *sound Christians, diseased Christians, and seeming Christians.*

And for the *manner* of this writing, I am conscious it hath but little to commend it. The *matter* is that for which it is published. The Lord *Verulam* in his *Essays* truly saith, that *much reading makes one full; much discourse doth make one ready, and much writing doth make a man exact.* Though I have had my part of all these means, yet being parted five years from my *Books*, and three years from my *Preaching*, the effects may decay; and you must expect neither *Quotations* or *Oratory* Testimonies or ornament of *style*: But having not yet wholly ceased from *Writing*, I may own so much of the *exactness* as will allow me to intreat the Reader, not to use me as many have done; who by over-looking some *one word*, have made the sense another thing, and have made it a crime to be *exact in Writing*, because they cannot or will not be *exact in Reading*, or charitable or humane in interpreting.

THE

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HE Characters of a strong confirmed Christian. page

1. He liveth by such a Faith of unseen things as governeth his soul instead of sight.
2. He hath cogent Reasons for his Religion.
3. He seeth the well-ordered frame of sacred verities, and the integral parts in their harmony or consort; and setteth not up one truth against another.
4. He adhereth to them, and practiseth them from an inward connatural principle, called, The Divine Nature, and The Spirit of Christ.
5. He serveth not God for fear only, but for Love.
6. He loveth God, 1. Much for his Goodness to himself. 2. And more for his Goodness to the Church. 3. And most of all for his essential Goodness and perfection.
7. He taketh this Love and its Expressions for the heart and height of all his Religion.
8. He hath absolutely put his soul and all his hopes into the hand of Christ, and liveth

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- He taketh Christ as the Teacher sent from God, and his Doctrine for the truest wisdom, and learneth of none but in subordination to him. 23
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- He loveth the Light, as it sheweth him his sin and duty; and is willing to know the worst of sin, and the most of duty. 27
- He desireth the highest degree of Holiness, and hath no sin which he had not rather leave than keep, and had rather be the Best, though in poverty, than the Greatest in prosperity. 30
- He liveth upon GOD and HEAVEN as the End, Reward, and Motive of his Life. 32
- He counteth no cost or pains too great for the obtaining it, and hath nothing so dear which he cannot part with for it. 35
- He is daily exercised in the practice of Self-denial as (next to the Love of God) the second half of his Religion. 38
- He hath mortified his fleshly desires, and so far mastereth his senses and appetite, that they make not his obedience very uneasie or uneven. 42
- He preferreth the means of his holiness and happiness, incomparably before all professions and pleasures of the flesh. 45
- He is crucified to the world, and the world

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- world to him by the Cross of Christ, and contemneth it through the belief of greater things of the life to come.
19. He foreseeth the End in all his way, and judgeth of all things as they will appear at last.
20. He liveth upon God alone, and is content with his favour and approbation without the approbation and favour of men.
21. He hath absolutely devoted himself, and all that he hath to God, to be used according to his will.
22. He hath a readiness to obey, and a quiet and pleasant compliance of his will to the will of God.
23. He delighteth himself more in God, and Heaven, and Christ, and Holiness, than in all the world: Religion is not tedious and grievous to him.
24. He is conscious of his own sincerity, and assured of his Justification, and title to Everlasting Joyes.
25. This Assurance doth not make him careless and remiss, but increaseth his love and holy diligence.
26. Yet he abhorreth Pride as the first horn of the Devil, and is very low and vile in his own eyes, and can easily endure to be low and vile in the eyes of others.
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formed to his crucified Lord, and hath al-
ready in heart forsaken all for him. 74

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pany, and all that he knoweth should for-
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pture, and the hardest passages of Gods
Providence. 80

11. He can exercise all his Graces in harmo-
ny, without neglecting one to use another, or
setting one against another. 81

12. He is more in getting and using Grace,
than in enquiring whether he have it
(though he do that also in its place.) 82

13. He studieth Duty more than Events, and
is more carefull what he should be towards
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- rather suffer wrong, than do it. 18
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and using them upon God, and for him. 8
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his judgement, his heart, his tongue
actions. 8
37. He governeth his tongue; imploying it for
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38. Heart work and Heaven-work are the
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39. He liveth upon the common great substan-
tials of Religion, and yet will not deny the
smallest Truth, or commit the smallest sin,
any price that man can offer him. 9
40. He is a high esteemer, and carefull Re-
deemer of Time, and abhorreth Idleness and
Diversions which would rob him of it. 9
41. His heart is set upon doing all the good
in the world that he is able: It is his daily
business and delight. 10
42. He truly loveth his neighbour as himself. 10
43. He hath a special love to all godly Chris-
tians as such, and such as will not stick at
in its due expressions, nor be turned into
bitterness by tolerable differences. 10
44. He forgiveth injuries, and loveth his en-
emies, and doth them all the good he can
from the sense of the love of Christ to him. 10

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45. He doth as he would be done by; and is as precise in the Justice of his dealings with men, as in acts of piety to God. 108
46. He is faithful and laborious in his outward trade or calling, not out of covetousness, but obedience to God. 111
47. He is very conscionable in the duties of his several Relations, in his family or other society, as a superiour, inferiour or equal. 112
48. He is the best subject whether his Rulers be good or bad; though Infidel and ungodly Rulers may mistake & use him as the worst. 113
49. His trust in God doth overcome the fear of man, and settle him in a constant fortitude for God. 117
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- or contentions. 146
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59. Though he greatly desireth lively Affections and gifts, yet he much more valueth the three Essential parts of holiness. 1. A high estimation in the Understanding of God, Christ, Holiness and Heaven, above all that be set in any competition. 2. A resolved choice and adhesion of the Will, to these above and against all competitors. 3. The seeking them first, in the endeavours of the life. And by these he judgeth of the sincerity of his heart. 162
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THE CHARACTER

OF A SOUND CONSCIENCE

CHRISTIAN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

2. OF A Weak Christian: And
3. OF A Secret Christian.



Written for the use of the young
and the weak (continued)

By the Author of the
"Goodness and Christianity."

LONDON: Printed by J. B. B. B. B.

The Second Edition of the
"Weak Christian" is now
published.

LONDON:

Printed by J. B. B. B. B.
the Author of the
"Goodness and Christianity."

THE
CHARACTER
OF

*A Sound Confirmed Christian,
And of the Weak Christian,
And of the Seeming Christian.*

IN the Explication of the Text, which I made the ground of the foregoing discourse, I have shewed you that there is a Degree of Grace to be expected and sought after by all true Christians, which putteth the Soul into a *sound, confirmed, and radicated* state, in comparison of that *weak, tottering* condition, which most Christians now continue in. And I have shewed you how desirable a state that is, and what calamities follow the languishing unhealthfull state even such as may be saved. And indeed do we but rightly understand, how deeply the errors and false